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THE LITERATURE OF ITALY

consists of sixteen volumes, of which this one forms a part. For full particulars of the edition see the Official Certificate bound in the volume entitled

**"A HISTORY OF ITALIAN
LITERATURE."**





Literature of Italy 1265—1907.

Edited by Rossiter Johnson and
Dora Knowlton Ranous

With a General Introduction by William
Michael Rossetti and Special Intro-
ductions by James, Cardinal Gibbons,
Charles Eliot Norton, S. G. W. Ben-
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New translations, and former render-
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1670

PORTRAIT OF VITTORIO ALFIERI

From a Painting by Saverio Fabre

BY
CARLO GOLDONI

THREE TRAGEDIES

BY
VITTORIO ALFIERI

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES LLOYD

THE NATIONAL ALUMNI

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INTRODUCTION

VOLTAIRE, with his unerring critical faculty, called Goldoni 'the Italian Molière,' and the two great dramatic writers are similar in imagination, spontaneity, knowledge of human nature, and the ability to draw the lighter side of life with brilliance and accuracy. The Italian playwright was born in Venice, February 25, 1707. His family was well-to-do, and he was brought up in the household of his grandfather, who had a strong taste for theatrical and operatic entertainments, and continually had this sort of amusement going on under his own roof. While Carlo was a mere lad, the grandfather died, leaving his affairs in bad condition. No property remained but the dowry of the youth's mother, and with this the family removed to Perugia, where the father studied medicine, and finally became a successful physician. Carlo attended school, and wrote little sketches and plays for his fellow-students, playing the female rôles in them himself. He was so enamored of this amateur theatrical experience that he ran away from school to go with a company of strolling players, but he soon returned from this escapade, and studied first medicine, and then law with an uncle in Venice. Here he found theaters, however, and was again fascinated with the stage, and with dramatic literature, into which he plunged deeply in a library where he spent much time. He found the great dramatic works of other countries, illustrating the manners and customs of those lands, but nothing that presented a true picture of Italy and the real life of her

INTRODUCTION

people. In those days what was known as comedy in Italy was a strange hodge-podge of half extemporaneous foolery, in which appeared four masked personages, upon whom all the farcical incidents turned. These were invariably: Pantaloon, a garrulous old simpleton, father of the heroine; a doctor or a professor, also an old man, whose learning was supposed to offset the simplicity of Pantaloon; and two servants, Harlequin and Brighella. Only a thread of a plot was supplied to these characters, and the actors furnished the dialogue and jests as the performance proceeded.

After studying the great plays of foreign writers, Goldoni determined to devote himself to reviving the drama of his own country, and to rescue her stage from the depths of puerile vulgarity into which it had fallen.

He began his work with a little play called *Amalasunta*, which was unsuccessful because of the hostility of the actors to the author's innovations. The latter was not discouraged, however, but continued to write, and produced many brilliant comedies, which were faithful pictures of real life among all classes of Italians, arousing the most unbounded admiration and applause, and driving from the stage forever the tedious old "comedy of masks." Among the most popular of his plays are *Pamela*, *La Vedova Scaltra* ("The Gay Widow"), *La Moglia Saggia* ("The Sensible Wife"), *The Fan*, *The Beneficent Bear*, and *An Odd Misunderstanding*. The first of the plays that we present was produced in Paris, and is popular to-day in Italy; the second play was founded on an episode in real life that occurred in Holland; and the last was originally written in French and brought out at the time of the festivities in honor of the marriage of Marie Antoinette and the Dauphin, later Louis XVI. Goldoni lived a long, happy and prosperous life, with the wife he had married in 1736, who was his truest

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friend and an unfailing inspiration. He passed some time in France, as a tutor at the royal court, writing there his brilliant and amusing memoirs in the French language. He died January 6, 1793, the pride and idol of his fellow-countrymen.

Of him Robert Browning tenderly wrote:

"Goldoni—good, gay, sunniest of souls—
Glassing half Venice in that verse of thine—
What though it just reflect the shade and shine
Of common life, nor render, as it rolls,
Grandeur and gloom? Sufficient for thy shoals
Was Carnival: Parini's depths enshrine
Secrets unsuited to that opaline
Surface of things which laughs along thy scrolls.
There throng the People: how they come and go,
Lisp the soft language, flaunt the bright garb—see—
On piazza, calle, under portico,
And over bridge! Dear King of Comedy,
Be honored! Thou that didst love Venice so,
Venice, and we who love her, all love thee!"

D. K. R.

THREE COMEDIES

BY

CARLO GOLDONI

THE FAN

AN ODD MISUNDERSTANDING

THE BENEFICENT BEAR

THE FAN

(Il Ventaglio)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

COUNT ROCCA MARINA.

BARON DEL CEDRO.

SIGNOR EVARISTO.

SIGNORA GERTRUDE, a widow.

CANDIDA, her niece.

CORONATO, an innkeeper.

MORACCHIO, a peasant.

NINA, his sister.

SUSANNA, a small shopkeeper.

CRISPINO, a shoemaker.

TIMOTEO, an apothecary.

LIMONCINO, a waiter.

TOGNINO, servant to the two ladies.

SCAVEZZO, boots to the innkeeper.

The scene is a little village near Milan

ACT I

[An open space bounded at the back by a house bearing the inscription *Osteria* (Inn). Houses to right and left; on the left a gentleman's mansion with a low projecting terrace. The foremost house has the word *Café* upon a swinging shield; before its main door and windows stand small tables and chairs. It has also a back door which adjoins a little pharmacy. At the end of the right-hand side of houses, a small shop. The inn has a restaurant on the ground-floor, and on the left a shoemaker's shop. Right and left, between the inn and the side houses, runs the street.]

Scene First

[Evaristo and the Baron sit toward the front at a little table drinking coffee. Limoncino serves them. Crispino is cobbling in his booth; near to him Coronato sits beside his door, writing in a notebook. Scavezzo cleans the restaurant windows. In the middle of the stage sits the Count reading a book. He is dressed in a white summer costume, while the Baron and Evaristo are in shooting-dress, with their guns beside them. Gertrude and Candida on the terrace, knitting. To the right Tognino is sweeping the square, Nina is spinning before her house door; beside her stands Moracchio holding two hunting-dogs by a cord. Occasionally Timoteo puts his head out of the pharmacy; in the background, Susanna sits sewing before her shop. A pause after the rise of

the curtain. All absorbed in their occupations. Crispino hammers energetically upon a shoe at which he is working. Timoteo pounds loudly in a mortar.]

Evaristo—How do you like this coffee?

Baron—It is good.

Evaristo—I find it excellent. Bravo, Limoncino! to-day you have surpassed yourself.

Limoncino—I thank you for the praise, but I do beg of you not to call me by this name of Limoncino.

Evaristo—I like that! Why, all know you by that name! You are famed by the name of Limoncino. All the world says, "Let us go to the village and drink coffee at Limocino's." And that vexes you?

Limoncino—Sir, it is not my name.

Baron—Eh, what! From to-day I will call you Mr. Orange.

Limoncino—I will not be the butt of all the world.

[Candida laughs aloud.]

Evaristo—What think you, Signorina Candida? [He takes up a fan which Candida has put down on the parapet of the terrace and fans himself, replacing it.]

Candida—What should I think? Why, it makes one laugh.

Gertrude—Leave the poor creature in peace; he makes good coffee, and is under my patronage.

Baron—Oh, if he is under the patronage of the Signora Gertrude, we must respect him. [Whispers to Evaristo.] Do you hear? The good widow protects him.

Evaristo [Softly to the Baron.]—Do not speak evil of the Signora Gertrude. She is the wisest and most reputed lady in all the world.

Baron [As above.]—As you like; but she has the same craze for patronizing as the Count over there, who is reading with the very mien of a judge.

Evaristo—Oh, as to him, you are not wrong. He is

truly a caricature, but it would be unjust to compare him with the Signora Gertrude.

Baron—For my part, I think them both ridiculous.

Evaristo—And what do you find ridiculous in the lady?

Baron—Too much instruction, too much pride, too much self-sufficiency.

Evaristo—Excuse me, then you do not know her.

Baron—I much prefer Signorina Candida.

[After carrying on this talk in half tones, they both rise to pay. Each protests to the other, the Baron forestalls Evaristo. Limoncino returns to the shop with the cups and the money. Timoteo pounds louder.]

Evaristo—Yes, it is true. The niece is an excellent person. [Aside.] I would not have him as a rival.

Count—Hi, Timoteo!

Timoteo—Who called me?

Count—When will you cease pounding?

Timoteo—Excuse me. [Pounds on.]

Count—I cannot read, you crack my skull.

Timoteo—Excuse me, I shall have done directly. [Continues louder.]

Crispino [Laughs aloud as he works.]—Hi, Coronato!

Coronato—What is it, Master Crispino?

Crispino [Beats hard on a sole he has in hand.] The Count does not wish us to make a noise. [Beats louder on his shoe.]

Count—What impudence! Will you never cease this noise?

Crispino—Does not the Count see what I am doing?

Count—And what are you doing?

Crispino—Mending your old shoes.

Count—Quiet, impudent fellow! [Continues to read.]

Crispino [Beats hard, and Timoteo also.] Host!

Count—Now, I can bear it no longer. [He rises from his seat.]

Scavezzo—Hi, Moracchio!

Moracchio—What is it, Scavezzo?

Scavezzo—The Count.

[Both laugh and mock at the Count.]

Moracchio—Quiet, quiet! after all, he is a gentleman.

Scavezzo—A strange one.

Nina—Moracchio!

Moracchio—What do you want?

Nina—What did Scavezzo say?

Moracchio—Nothing, nothing. Attend to your own affairs, and spin.

Nina [Turns away her chair with contempt, and goes on spinning.]—My good brother is truly as amiable as ever. He always treats me thus. I can hardly await the hour when I shall marry.

Susanna—What is the matter, Nina?

Nina—Oh, if you knew! In all the world I don't think there is a greater boor than my brother.

Moracchio—I am as I am, and as long as you are under me—

Nina [Pouts and spins.]—Not much longer, I hope.

Evaristo [To Moracchio.]—Now, what is it all about again? You are always teasing that poor child, and she does not deserve it, poor thing.

Nina—He makes me wild with anger.

Moracchio—She wishes to know everything.

Evaristo—Come, come, that will do now.

Baron [To Candida.]—Signor Evaristo is kind-hearted.

Candida [With disdain.]—It seems so to me also.

Gertrude [To Candida.]—Look to yourself, child. We criticise the actions of others, and do not take care of our own.

Baron [Aside.]—There, that is the sort of preaching I can't bear to hear.

Crispino [Aside while he works.]—Poor Nina! But once she is my wife, he won't tease her any more.

Coronato [Aside.]—Yes, I will marry her, if it were only to free her from the brother.

Evaristo—Well, Baron, shall we go?

Baron—To tell you the truth, this morning I do not feel like going shooting. I am tired from yesterday.

Evaristo—Do as you like. You will excuse me if I go?

Baron—Do not let me detain you. [Aside.] So much the better for me. I will try my luck with Signorina Candida.

Evaristo—Moracchio! we will go. Call the dogs and take your gun.

Baron [To Evaristo.]—Shall you come back to dinner?

Evaristo—Certainly. I have ordered it already.

Baron—Then I will await you. *Au revoir*, ladies [Aside.] I will go to my room, so as to rouse no suspicions. [Exit.

Scene Second

The same. MORACCHIO comes back.

Moracchio—Here I am, sir, with the dogs and the gun.

Evaristo—If you will allow me, ladies, I will go shooting a while.

Gertrude—Pray do as you please, and enjoy yourself.

Candida—And good luck.

Evaristo—Accompanied by your good wishes, I must be lucky. [He busies himself with his gun.]

Candida [Aside.]—Signor Evaristo is really amiable.

Gertrude—Yes, amiable and well-mannered. But, niece, distrust all strangers.

Candida—Why should I distrust him?

Gertrude—For some time I have had my reasons for this.

Candida—I have always been reserved.

Gertrude—Yes, I am content with you. Continue to be reserved toward him.

Candida [Aside.]—This warning comes too late. I am deeply enamored of him.

Evaristo—All is right. Come, Moracchio. Once more, ladies, your humble servant.

[Gertrude bows. Candida the same. In doing so, she knocks her fan from the parapet into the street. Evaristo picks it up.]

Candida—Oh, never mind.

Gertrude—Do not trouble.

Evaristo—The fan is broken. How sorry I am!

Candida—What does it matter?—an old fan!

Evaristo—Well, if you will allow me—[Gives the fan to Tognino, who takes it into the house.]

Candida—There, aunt, you see how it vexes him that the fan is broken.

Gertrude—Good manners demand that. [Aside.] Love is in play here, I fancy.

Scene Third

The same. TOGNINO on the terrace. He hands the fan to CANDIDA.

Evaristo—I am vexed that this fan was broken on my account, but I will make it good. [To Susanna.] I should like to speak to you, but inside the shop. [To Moracchio.] Go on ahead, and wait for me at the edge of the wood. [Enters shop with Susanna.]

Moracchio [To himself.]—I call this waste of time. Out upon these gentleman sportsmen! [Exit.]

Nina [To herself.]—So much the better that my brother has at last gone. I can hardly await the moment to be alone with Crispino. But this tiresome man, the

host, is always around. He follows me perpetually, and I can't abide him.

Count [Reading.]—Oh, beautiful, beautiful! [To Gertrude.] Signora!

Crispino—What have you read that is interesting, Count?

Count—What does that matter to you? What do you understand about it?

Crispino [Hammers.]—I'll wager I know more than you!

Gertrude—You called me, Count?

Count—You, a lady of taste—oh, if you could hear what I have just read! A masterpiece!

Gertrude—Something historical?

Count—No.

Gertrude—A philosophical discussion?

Count—Bah! No.

Gertrude—A poem?

Count—Bah! No, no!

Gertrude—What then?

Count—Something astonishing, unheard of, translated from the French! A fable.

Crispino—A fable! Astonishing! Unheard of! [Hammers hard.]

Count—Would you like to hear?

Gertrude—Gladly.

Crispino—Why, he reads fables, like little children! [Hammers.]

Count—Will you leave off your noise?

Crispino [Hammers.]—I am putting a patch on your shoe.

[Timoteo pestles.]

Count—The devil's own noise! And you too?

Timoteo [Puts his head outside the pharmacy.] It is my business.

Count [Reads.]—"There was once a lovely maiden"—

[To Timoteo.] Go to the devil with your mortar! It is not to be borne.

Timoteo—I pay my rent, and have no better place in which to pound. [Pounds.]

Count—If you will allow, Signora, I will take the liberty of coming up to you. You will then hear the beautiful fable. [Goes into the house.]

Gertrude—This chemist is too tiresome. Let us go and receive the Count.

Candida—I don't care to hear his fables.

Gertrude—But good manners demand it.

Candida—Bother the Count!

Gertrude—Niece, honor that you may be honored. Come. [Goes into the house.]

Candida [Rises to follow her.]—To please you.

Scene Fourth

The same, without the COUNT and GERTRUDE.

EVARISTO and SUSANNA come out of the shop.

Candida—What! Signor Evaristo still here? Not gone shooting? I should like to know the reason. [Watches him from the back of the terrace.]

Susanna—Do not complain, sir, the fan is cheap.

Evaristo [Aside.]—Candida is no longer here. [Aloud.] I am sorry the fan is not more beautiful.

Susanna—That was the last of those of the first quality. Now I have no more. [Smiles.] I suppose it is for a present?

Evaristo—Certainly. I do not buy fans for myself.

Susanna—For Signorina Candida, because hers was broken?

Evaristo [Impatiently.]—No; for some one else.

Susanna—Very well! I am not curious. [Reseats herself at work in front of the shop.]

Candida—He has great secrets with the shopkeeper.

I am curious to hear the details. [Approaches to the front.]

Evaristo [Approaches Nina.]—Nina!

Nina—Your wishes, sir?

Evaristo—A favor—I know Signorina Candida loves you.

Nina—Yes, she has pity on the poor orphan. But alas! I am subjected to my brother, who embitters my life.

Evaristo—Listen to me.

Nina [Spins.]—Spinning does not make me deaf.

Evaristo [To himself.]—Her brother is full of whims, but neither does she seem free of them.

[Susanna, Crispino, and Coronato stretch out their heads to observe the couple.]

Candida—Business with the shopwoman; business with Nina. I do not understand. [Approaches nearer.]

Evaristo—May I ask you a favor?

Nina—Have I not already answered you? Have I not told you to command? I am not deaf. If my spindle disturbs you, I will throw it aside. [Does so.]

Evaristo—How impetuous you are!

Candida—What does her anger signify?

Coronato—It seems to me they are getting angry. [Creeps to the front, with a small book in his hand.]

Crispino—She throws aside her spindle. [Does the same with his shoe and hammer.]

Susanna—Would he give her a present were she less angry? [Approaches nearer.]

Nina—I am at your orders.

Evaristo—You know that Signorina Candida broke her fan?

Nina—Why, certainly.

Evaristo—I have bought a new one at the shop.

Nina—As you please.

Evaristo—But Signora Gertrude must not know.

Nina—There you do wisely.

Evaristo—And I wish that you should give her the fan secretly.

Nina—I cannot serve you.

Evaristo—How unkind of you!

Candida [To herself.]—He told me he was going shooting, and he is still here.

Crispino [Approaches, pretending to be at work.] If I could only hear something!

Coronato [Approaches, pretending to write in the book.]—I can scarcely contain myself for curiosity.

Evaristo—Why will you not do me this favor?

Nina—Because I wish to know nothing about this matter.

Evaristo—You take it too seriously. Candida loves you so much—

Nina—True, but in such matters—

Evaristo—You told me you wished to marry Crispino. [Turns and sees the two listeners.] What do you want here, you rogues?

Crispino [Seats himself hastily.]—I am working, sir.

Coronato [Does the same.]—Can I not reckon and walk around at the same time?

Candida—They are discussing important secrets.

Susanna—What is there about this Nina that all the men are after her?

Nina—If you want nothing else of me, I will go on spinning. [Does so.]

Evaristo—But listen, do! Candida has begged me to give you a dowry that you may wed your Crispino.

Nina [Suddenly grows friendly.] Really?

Evaristo—Yes; and I gave her my word that I would do all—

Nina—Where is the fan?

Evaristo—Here.

Nina—Quick, quick, give it to me, but so that no one sees. [Evaristo gives her the fan.]

Crispino [Advances his head.]—Ho! ho! he gave her something!

Susanna [The same.]—It is true—he gave her the fan!

Coronato—What could he have given her?

Candida—Yes, he deceives me. The Count is right.

Evaristo—But, mind, quite secretly.

Nina—Let me act, and do not fear.

Evaristo—Farewell for the present.

Nina—My respects.

Evaristo—Then I may rely on you?

Nina—And I on you. [Seats herself and resumes her spinning.]

Evaristo [About to go, sees Candida on the terrace.]—Ah, there she is again! I will tell her to be attentive. [Calls.] Signorina Candida!

[Candida turns her back to him and goes away.]

Evaristo—What does this mean? Is it contempt? Does she despise me? Impossible! I know she loves me, and she knows my passion for her. And yet—no, now I understand. Her aunt will have seen and observed her, and she would not show any interest before her. Yes, yes, it must be that, it cannot be anything else. But I must at last give up all this secrecy, and talk with Signora Gertrude, and obtain from her the precious gift of her niece.

Nina—In truth, I owe the Signorina thanks that she interests herself in me. Shall I not repay her? These are little services one exchanges without any base thoughts.

Coronato [Gets up and goes to Nina.]—Hm, great secrets, great consultations with Signor Evaristo?

Nina—What does not concern you, does not matter to you.

Coronato—Were that the fact, I should not interfere.

[Crispino approaches the couple quietly to listen.]

Nina—I am not subservient to you, Master Host.

Coronato—Not yet, but I hope soon.

Nina—Indeed! and who says so?

Coronato—He has said it, and promised it, and sworn it, and he can and may dispose of you.

Nina [Laughs.]—What, my brother?

Coronato—Yes, your brother; and I will tell him of all the secrets, the confidence, the presents—

Crispino [Comes between them.]—Ho! ho! what right have you to this girl?

Coronato—I owe you no answer.

Crispino—And you, what have you to discuss with Signor Evaristo?

Nina—Leave me in peace, both of you.

Crispino—I will know!

Coronato—What, you will? Command where you may command. Nina is my betrothed, her brother has promised her to me.

Crispino—And I have her word, and the word of the sister is worth a thousand times more than that of the brother.

Coronato—She is as good as betrothed to me.

Crispino—We will speak of this again. Nina, what did Signor Evaristo give you?

Nina—Go to the devil with you!

Coronato—No answer! But stop, I saw him come out of Susanna's shop. She will tell me. [Goes toward Susanna.]

Crispino—He bought her a present. [He, too, goes to Susanna.]

Nina [To herself.]—I shall reveal nothing. But if Susanna—

Coronato—Neighbor, I beg you, what did Signor Evaristo buy of you?

Susanna [Laughs.]—A fan.

Crispino—Do you know what he gave Nina?

Susanna—What could it be but the fan?

Nina—That is not true.

Susanna—Why, certainly it is!

Coronato [To Nina.]—Produce the fan.

Crispino [Pushes him away.]—Here I command! I must see the fan.

Coronato [Raises his fist toward Crispino.] Wait a while.

Crispino [Threatens.]—Yes, you wait too.

Nina [To Susanna.]—It is all your fault.

Susanna—Mine?

Nina—Chatterbox!

Susanna—Oh, ho! [Threatens her.]

Susanna—I shall go.—Peasant girl, consort with your likes. [Retires into her shop.]

Crispino—But now I will see the fan.

Nina—I have not got one.

Coronato—What did the gentleman give you?

Nina—Your curiosity is impertinent.

Coronato—I will know.

Crispino [To Coronato.]—I tell you that does not concern you.

Nina—This is not the way to treat a respectable girl. [Goes toward her house.]

Crispino [Approaches her.]—Tell me, Nina.

Nina—No.

Coronato—I must know. [Pushes Crispino aside.]

[Nina hurries into the house and shuts the door in both their faces.]

Coronato—It's your fault.

Crispino—Impudent fellow!

Coronato—Do not excite yourself.

Crispino—I do not fear you.

Coronato—Nina will be mine!

Crispino—We shall see about that. And should she be, I swear—

Coronato—What, threats? Do you not know to whom you speak?

Crispino—I am an honest man, as all know.

Coronato—And what am I, pray?

Crispino—I know nothing about it.

Coronato—I am an honored innkeeper.

Crispino—Honored?

Coronato—What! you doubt it.

Crispino—Oh, it is not I who doubt it.

Coronato—Who, then, may I ask?

Crispino—All the village.

Coronato—My good man, it is not about me that all talk. I do not sell old leather for new.

Crispino—Nor I water for wine; nor do I trap cats at night to sell them as lamb or hare.

Coronato—I swear to Heaven—[Raises his hand.]

Crispino—What! [Does the same.]

Coronato—The devil take me! [Feels in his pocket.]

Crispino—His hand in his pocket! [Runs to his booth to fetch an implement.]

Coronato—I have no knife.

[Crispino seizes the apothecary's chair and threatens to hurl it at his adversary. Coronato takes up a bench and swings it at Crispino.]

Scene Fifth

*The same. TIMOTEO SCAVEZZO, LIMONCINO.
the COUNT.*

[Timoteo hurries out of his shop, pestle in hand.

Limoncino, out of the café with a log of firewood. Scavezzo, out of the inn with a spit.]

Count [Comes out of Gertrude's house.]—Peace,

peace! quiet there, I command!—I, you villains, the Count Rocca Marina! Ho, there, peace, I say, you rogues!

Crispino [*To Coronato.*—Well, to please the Count.

Coronato—Yes, thank the Count, for but for him I would have broken all the bones in your body.

Count—Quiet, quiet, it is enough! I wish to know the reason of this quarrel. Go away, you others. I am here, no one else is needed.

Timoteo—Is no one hurt?

[*Limoncino and Scavezzo depart.*]

Count—You wish that they had cracked their skulls, contorted their arms, disjoined their legs, is it not so, Apothecary, to show us a specimen of your talents and powers?

Timoteo—I seek no one's ill; but if there were wounded to heal, cripples to succor, broken heads to bind up, I would gladly help them. Above all, I would with all my heart serve your worship in such an event.

Count—Impertinent fellow! I will have you removed.

Timoteo—Honest men are not removed so easily.

Count—Yes, one removes ignorant, impudent impostors of apothecaries like you.

Timoteo—I am astonished to hear you talk thus, Count—you who without my pills would be dead.

Count—Insolent fellow!

Timoteo—And those pills you have not yet paid for.

[*Exit.*]

Coronato [*Aside.*—Here the Count might be of use to me.

Count—Well, now, my men, tell me what is the matter, what is the reason for your quarrels?

Crispino—I will tell you, sir—I will tell it before all the world. I love Nina.

Coronato—And Nina will be my wife.

Count [*Laughs.*—Ah ha! I understand: a love quar-

rel; two champions of Cupid, two worthy rivals, two pretenders to the lovely Venus of our village.

Crispino—If you think to make fun of me—[Moves to go away.]

Count—No, stay.

Coronato—The matter is serious, I assure you.

Count—Yes, I believe it. You are lovers, you are rivals. By Jupiter, what a combination! Why, the very theme of the fable I was reading to Signora Gertrude just now. [Points to his book.] “There was a maiden of rare beauty”—

Crispino—I understand. With your permission—

Count—Where are you going? Come here!

Crispino—If you will allow me, I will finish cobbling your shoes.

Count—Yes, go, that they may be ready by to-morrow.

Coronato—And be careful that they are not patched with old leather.

Crispino—I shall come to you when I want a fresh skin.

Coronato—Thank Heaven I am no cobbler nor shoe-maker!

Crispino—It does not matter, you will give me a horse's skin or a cat's.

Coronato [Aside.]—I know I shall kill that man.

Count—What did he say of cats? Do you give us cats to eat?

Coronato—Sir, I am an honest man, and this person is a rogue who persecutes me unjustly.

Count—The effect of love, of rivalry. So you are in love with Nina?

Coronato—Yes, sir, and I was about to seek your protection.

Count—My protection? [Gives himself an important air.] Well, we will see. Are you sure she loves you in return?

Coronato—To tell the truth, I fancy she loves him better than me.

Count—That is bad.

Coronato—But I have her brother's word.

Count—A thing not much to be relied on.

Coronato—Moracchio has promised it to me most faithfully.

Count—So far so good, but you cannot force a woman.

Coronato—Her brother can dispose of her.

Count [Hotly.]—It is not true. Her brother cannot dispose of her.

Coronato—But your protection.

Count—My protection is all well and good. My protection is valid and powerful. But a nobleman, such as I, does not arbitrate nor dispose of a woman's heart.

Coronato—But, after all, she is a peasant.

Count—What does that matter? A woman is ever a woman. I distinguish the grades, the conditions, but as a whole I respect the sex.

Coronato [Aside.]—I understand. Your protection is worthless.

Count—How are you stocked with wine? have you a good supply?

Coronato—I have some that is perfect, in fact, exquisite.

Count—I shall come and taste it. Mine has turned out bad this year.

Coronato [Aside.]—He has been selling for two years.

Count—If yours is good, I will take a supply.

Coronato [Aside.]—I do not care for this patronage.

Count—Do you hear?

Coronato—Yes, I hear.

Count—Tell me one thing: if I were to speak to the girl, and induced her by explanations—

Coronato—Your words might do something in my favor.

Count—After all, you deserve to be preferred.

Coronato—It seems to me, too, that between me and Crispino—

Count—Oh, there is no comparison!—a man like you, educated, well dressed, a respectable person.

Coronato—You are too kind.

Count—I respect women, it is true, but just because of that, treating them as I do, I assure you, they do for me what they would do for no one else.

Coronato—I thought as much, but you tried to make me doubt.

Count—I do as the lawyers do, who begin by making difficulties. Friend, you have a good inn, and can afford to maintain a wife decently. Have confidence in me, I will take up your cause.

Coronato—I beg your protection.

Count—I accord it. I promise it.

Coronato—If you would put yourself out to come and taste my wine—

Count—Most gladly, my good man. [Puts his hand on his shoulder.]

Coronato [Aside.]—Two or three barrels of wine will not be ill spent here.

ACT II

Scene First

SUSANNA alone, comes out of her shop and arranges her wares in front of it.

Susanna—Bad times, little business to be done in this village. I have as yet sold but one fan, and that I have given for a low price—really, just to get rid of it. The people who can spend get their supplies in the city.

From the poor there is little to earn. I am a fool to lose my time here among these peasants, without manners, without respect, who do not know the difference between a shopwoman of education and those who sell milk, salad, and eggs. My town education stands me no stead in the country. All are equal, all companions, Susanna, Nina, Margherita, Lucia; the shopkeeper, the goatherd, the peasant, all one. The two ladies yonder are somewhat more considered, but little, very little. As for that impertinent Nina, because she is favored by the gentry, she thinks she is something great. A gentleman has given her a fan. What will a peasant girl do with such a fan? Cut a dash, eh! the minx must fan herself, thus. Much good may it do you! Why, it's ridiculous, and yet these things at times make me rage. I, who have been well educated, I can't tolerate such absurdities. [Seats herself and sews.]

Scene Second

CANDIDA comes out of the mansion.

Candida—I shan't be at peace till I have cleared it up. I saw Evaristo come out of the shop and go to Nina, and certainly he gave her something. I must see whether Susanna can tell me anything. Yes, aunt is right: "Distrust all strangers." Poor me! If he prove unfaithful! It is my first love. I have loved none but him. [Advances toward Susanna.]

Susanna [Rises.]—Ah, Signorina Candida, your humble servant.

Candida—Good day, Susanna. What are you working at so busily?

Susanna—I am making a cap.

Candida—To sell?

Susanna—To sell, but Heaven knows when.

Candida—It might be that I need a nightcap.

Susanna—I have some in stock. Will you see them?

Candida—No, no, there is no hurry. Another time.

Susanna—Will you take a seat? [Offers her chair.]

Candida—And you?

Susanna—Oh, I will fetch another chair. [She goes into the shop and brings out a second chair.] Pray sit here, you will be more comfortable.

Candida—You sit down also and go on working.

Susanna [Does so.]—What an honor you afford me! One sees at once you are well-born. He who is well-born despises no one. The peasants here are proud, and Nina especially.

Candida—Speaking of Nina, did you notice her when Signor Evaristo spoke to her?

Susanna—Did I notice? I should think so.

Candida—He had a long talk with her.

Susanna—Do you know what happened afterward? Such a fight as there was!

Candida—I heard a noise, an angry discussion. They told me Crispino and Coronato were quarreling.

Susanna—Precisely, and all because of this beauty, this treasure.

Candida—But why?

Susanna—Jealousy between themselves, jealousy because of Signor Evaristo.

Candida—Do you think Signor Evaristo has any fancy for Nina?

Susanna—I know nothing. I do not concern myself about others' affairs, and think ill of no one; but if the host and the shoemaker are jealous of him, they must have their reasons.

Candida [Aside.]—Alas! the argument is but too true, to my sorrow.

Susanna—Excuse me, I should not like to make a mistake.

Candida—In what?

Susanna—I hope that you take no interest in Signor Evaristo?

Candida—I? Oh, none whatever! I know him because he sometimes comes to the house, and is a friend of my aunt's.

Susanna—Then I will tell you the truth. [Aside.] I do not think this can offend her. [Aloud.] I almost thought that between you and Signor Evaristo there was some understanding—of course permissible and respectable—but since he was with me this morning I am of another opinion.

Candida—He was with you this morning?

Susanna—Yes. He came to buy a fan.

Candida [Eagerly.]—He bought a fan?

Susanna—Precisely; and as I had seen that you had broken yours, so to speak, on his account, I at once said to myself, He buys it to give it to the Signorina Candida.

Candida—So he bought it for me?

Susanna—Oh, no, Signorina. I will confess to you I took the liberty of asking him if he were buying it for you. He replied as if I had offended him, "That is not your business; what is there between me and the Signorina Candida? I have destined it elsewhere."

Candida—And what did he do with the fan?

Susanna—What did he do with it? He gave it to Nina.

Candida [Aside.]—Oh, I am lost! I am miserable!

Susanna [Observing her agitation.]—Signorina Candida!

Candida [Aside.]—Ungrateful, unfaithful, and for whom?—for a peasant girl!

Susanna [With insistence.]—Signorina Candida!

Candida [Aside.]—The offense is insupportable.

Susanna [Aside.]—Poor me! What have I done?—
Signorina Candida, calm yourself, it may not be so.

Candida—Do you believe he gave the fan to Nina?

Susanna—Oh, as to that, I saw it with my own eyes.

Candida—And then you say it may not be so?

Susanna—I do not know—I do not wish that by my fault—

Scene Third

The same. GERTRUDE at the door of the villa.

Susanna—See, there is your aunt.

Candida—For Heaven's sake, say nothing!

Susanna—Do not fear.—[Aside.] And she would have me believe she does not love him! It's her own fault. Why did she not tell me the truth?

Gertrude—What are you doing here, niece?

[Candida and Susanna rise.]

Susanna—She is condescending to give me her company.

Candida—I came to see whether she sold nightcaps.

Susanna—Yes, it is true, she asked me about some. Oh, do not fear that your niece is not safe with me. I am no chatterbox, and my house is most respectable.

Gertrude—Do not try to justify yourself without being accused.

Susanna—I am very sensitive, Signora.

Gertrude—Why did you not tell me you needed a nightcap?

Candida—You were in your writing-room, and I did not wish to disturb you.

Susanna—Would you like to see it? I will go and get it. I pray, sit down. [Gives her chair to Gertrude, and goes into the shop.]

Gertrude [Seats herself, to Candida.]—Have you heard

nothing of this encounter between the shoemaker and the host?

Candida—They say it is a matter of love and jealousy, and that Nina is the cause.

Gertrude—I am sorry, for she is a good girl.

Candida—Oh, aunt, excuse me; I have heard things about her of a nature that would make it better we should no longer let her come to the house.

Gertrude—Why? What have they told you?

Candida—I will tell you later. Do as I do, aunt; don't receive her any more, and you will do well.

Gertrude—Since she came more often to see you than to see me, I leave you free to treat her as you please.

Candida [Aside.]—The minx! she will not have the impudence to appear before me.

Susanna [Returns.]—Here are the caps, ladies; see, choose, and please yourselves. [All three examine the caps, and speak softly among themselves.]

Scene Fourth

The same. Enter the COUNT and the BARON from the inn.

Count—I am glad you have confided in me. Leave the rest to me, and do not fear.

Baron—I know you are Signora Gertrude's friend.

Count—Oh, friend!—well, I will tell you. She is a lady who has some talents; I like literature, I converse with her more willingly than with any other. For the rest, she is a poor city dame. Her husband left her this wretched house and some acres of ground, and, in order to be respected in this village, she needs my protection.

Baron—Long live the Count, who protects widows and fair ladies!

Count—What would you have? In this world one must be good for something.

Baron—Then you will do me the favor—

Count—Do not fear, I will speak to her; I will ask her niece's hand for a cavalier who is my friend, and when I have asked her I am sure she will not have the courage to say no.

Baron—Tell her who I am.

Count—To what purpose, when it is I who ask?

Baron—But you ask for me.

Count—For you.

Baron—You know precisely who I am.

Count—How should I not know your titles, your faculties, your honors! Oh, we members of the aristocracy all know one another.

Baron [Aside.]—How I should laugh at him if I had not need of him!

Count—My dear colleague!

Baron—What is it?

Count—Behold Signora Gertrude and her niece.

Baron—They are busy; I do not think they have seen us.

Count—Certainly not. If Signora Gertrude had seen me, she would have moved instantly.

Baron—When will you speak to her?

Count—At once, if you like.

Baron—It is not well I should be here. Speak to her. I will wait at the apothecary's. I am in your hands.

Count—Good-by, dear colleague and friend.

Baron—Good-by, beloved colleague. [Embraces him. Aside.] He is the maddest March hare in the world.

Count [Calling aloud.]—Signora Gertrude!

Gertrude [Rising.]—Oh, Count, excuse me! I did not see you.

Count—I beg you to give me a word.

Susanna—Pray approach. My shop is at your service.

Count—No, no; I have something private to say. Excuse the trouble, but I beg you come here.

Gertrude—In a moment. Allow me to pay for a cap I have bought, and then I am at your disposal. [Pulls out a purse to pay Susanna, and to prolong the moment.]

Count—What! you would pay at once! I never had that vice.

Scene Fifth

Enter CORONATO from the inn with SCAVEZZO, who carries a barrel of wine on his shoulders.

Coronato—Honored sir, this is the barrel of wine for you.

Count—And the second?

Coronato—After this I will bring the second. Where shall we take it?

Count—To my palace.

Coronato—To whom shall I consign it?

Count—To my steward, if he is there.

Coronato—I am afraid he is not there.

Count—Give it to any one you find.

Coronato—All right. Let us go.

Scavezzo—The Count will give me some drink money.

Count—Take care not to drink my wine, and don't put water to it.—[To Coronato.] Don't let him go alone.

Coronato—Never fear, never fear! I go too.

Scavezzo [Aside.]—No, no, don't fear; between the master and me we have prepared it by this time.

[Exit.

Gertrude [Who has paid, advances toward the Count. Susanna is seated, and works. Candida remains seated. They whisper together.]—Here I am, Count, and what is it you wish?

Count—In a few words, will you give me your niece?

Gertrude—Give? What do you mean by give?

Count—What? don't you understand? In marriage.

Gertrude—To you?

Count—Not to me, but to a person I know and will propose to you.

Gertrude—I will tell you, Count: you know my niece has lost her parents, and, as she is the daughter of my brother, I have undertaken to fill for her a mother's place.

Count—All these—excuse me!—are useless discourses.

Gertrude—Pardon me. Let me come to my point.

Count—Well, what then?

Gertrude—Candida has not inherited enough from her father to suffice to marry her in her own rank.

Count—It does not matter; there is no question of money here.

Gertrude—Let me finish. My husband left me an ample provision.

Count—I know.

Gertrude—I have no children.

Count—And you will give her a dowry?

Gertrude—Yes, if the match shall meet her favor.

Count—Oh, yes, that is the needful point. But I am proposing this match, and when I propose, it must meet her favor.

Gertrude—I am certain that the Count is incapable of proposing other than an acceptable person, but I hope he will do me the honor to tell me who this person is.

Count—A colleague of mine.

Gertrude—What! a colleague! What does that mean?

Count—An aristocrat, like yourself.

Gertrude—Signor—

Count—Do not raise objections.

Gertrude—Pray let me speak. If you will not let me, I shall go.

Count—Come, come, be gracious! Speak, I listen. I am amiable, complaisant with ladies. I listen to you.

Gertrude—I will tell you what I feel in a few words. A title makes the honor of a house, but not of a person.

I do not think my niece is ambitious, nor am I inclined to sacrifice her to the idol of vanity.

Count [Laughs.]—Ah, one can see that you read fables.

Gertrude—Such feelings are not learned from fables nor from novels. Nature inspires them and education cultivates them.

Count—Nature, education—what you will. He whom I propose is the Baron del Cedro.

Gertrude—The Baron is in love with my niece?

Count—Yes, Signora.

Gertrude—I know him and respect him.

Count—You see what a good match I propose to you.

Gertrude—He is a gentleman of merit.

Count—And my colleague.

Gertrude—He is perhaps a trifle free of speech, but without harm.

Count—Well, now, your answer, I beg?

Gertrude—Gently, gently, Count—Such matters are not decided all in a moment. I should like the Baron to have the goodness to speak to me.

Count—Excuse me, if I say a thing, there can be no doubt about it. I woo in his behalf, and he has begged my intercession, implored me—And I speak to you, beg you—that is to say, I do not beg you, I demand of you—

Gertrude—Let us admit that the Baron is in earnest.

Count—By Jupiter, what is this we are to admit? the thing is certain when I say so.

Gertrude—Admitted, then, that the thing is certain. The Baron desires her, you demand her. But it is needful that I should ask Candida whether she assents.

Count—She cannot know about it unless you tell her.

Gertrude [Ironically.]—Have the goodness to believe that I shall tell her.

Count—Here she comes. Speak to her about it.

Gertrude—I will speak to her.

Count—Go, then, and I will wait you here.

Gertrude [Bowing.] Excuse me.—[Aside.] If the Baron is in earnest, it would indeed be a piece of good luck for my niece, but I doubt. [Goes toward Susanna.]

Count—Ha, ha! with my good manners I get all I wish from everyone. [Takes a book from his pocket, seats himself, and reads.]

Gertrude—Candida, I have to speak to you. Let us take a turn.

Susanna—Will you go into my little garden? You will be quite free there.

Gertrude—Yes, let us go there, because I must come back here at once.

Candida [Aside.]—What can she have to tell me? I am too miserable to expect any good news. [Both enter the shop.]

Count—She is capable of keeping me waiting here for an hour. It is well that I have this book to entertain me. What a beautiful thing is literature! A man with a good book is never alone. [Reads.]

Scene Sixth

The COUNT. Enter NINA from her house.

Nina—Well, one good thing, the dinner is ready, so when that fellow Moracchio comes he can't scold me. No one is looking. I had better go now and take the fan to Signorina Candida. If I can give it her without her aunt seeing, I will; if not, I'll await another chance.

Count—Why, Nina, Nina. Ho, here, my girl! [Goes toward the villa.]

Nina—Signor. [Turns to look at him.]

Count—A word.

Nina—[Aside.]—I did not need this impediment.

Count—[Aside.]—I must not neglect Coronato. I have promised him my protection, and he merits it. [Gets up and puts aside his book.]

Nina—Here I am. What do you wish, sir?

Count—Where were you going?

Nina—To attend to my own business, sir.

Count—What! You reply like that to me, with such audacity, such impertinence?

Nina—How would you have me speak? I speak as I know how; I am not used to converse. I speak like that with everyone, and no one has told me I am impertinent.

Count—You must distinguish among the people with whom you speak.

Nina—I don't know how to distinguish. If you want something, say it! If you want to amuse yourself, I have no time to lose with your worship.

Count—Come here.

Nina—I am here.

Count—Would you like to marry?

Nina—Yes, sir.

Count—That is well; you please me now.

Nina—Oh, what I have in my heart, I have in my mouth.

Count—Would you like me to find you a husband?

Nina—No, sir.

Count—How no?

Nina—How no? Because it is no; because in order to marry I have no need of you.

Count—Do you not need my protection?

Nina—No, indeed, not a bit of it.

Count—Do you understand all I can do in this village?

Nina—You may be able to do much in the village, but you can do nothing in my marriage.

Count—I can do nothing?

Nina [Smiles gently.]—Nothing, in truth, nothing, nothing.

Count—You are in love with Crispino.

Nina—He is to my taste.

Count—And you prefer him to that worthy man, to that rich man, that admirable man, Coronato?

Nina—I would prefer him to others far better than Coronato.

Count—You would prefer him to any other?

Nina [Laughs, and makes him understand that she refers to him.]—Oh, and if you knew to whom, for instance!

Count—And to whom would you prefer him, then?

Nina—To what end? Do not make me chatter.

Count—No, because you would be capable of uttering some impertinence.

Nina—Do you want anything else of me?

Count—Simply this: I protect your brother, your brother has promised you to Coronato, and you must marry Coronato.

Nina [With affectation.]—Your worship protects my brother?

Count—Just so.

Nina—And my brother has given his word to Coronato?

Count—Just so.

Nina—Well, if things be so—

Count—Well?

Nina—Let my brother marry the host.

Count—I swear that you shall never marry Crispino.

Nina—No? And why?

Count—I shall send him away from this village.

Nina—I shall go and seek for him wherever he is.

Count—I shall have him beaten.

Nina—Oh, as for that, he will have something to say.

Count—What would you do if he were dead?

Nina—I do not know.

Count—Would you take another?

Nina—I might.

Count—Imagine that he is dead.

Nina—Sir, I can neither read, nor write, nor reckon.

Count—Saucy girl!

Nina—Do you want anything else?

Count—Go to the devil!

Nina—Show me the road!

Count—I swear, were you not a woman—

Nina—What would you do?

Count—Go hence, I say!

Nina—I obey at once, for I am well bred.

Count—Well bred? and goes off and does not salute!

Nina—Oh, pardon me. I am till death your worship's obedient servant. [Laughs and runs toward the villa.]

Count [With scorn.]—*Rustica progenies nescit habere modum*. I do not know what to do. If she does not want Coronato, I can't force her. It is not my fault. Why on earth does he want a wife who does not want him? Are women scarce? I will find him one better than this. He shall see what my protection is worth.

Scene Seventh

The same. GERTRUDE and CANDIDA outside the shop.

Count—Well, Signora Gertrude?

Gertrude—Count, my niece is a prudent girl.

Count—Well, then, briefly?

Gertrude—Count, permit me.

Count—Pardon me, but if you knew what I have endured with a woman—it is true, another woman—[Aside.] But all women are alike.—Well, then, what does Candida say?

Gertrude—If the Baron really—

Count—Really! out upon your suspicions!

Gertrude—Admitting the condition and the circumstances, my niece is willing to marry the Baron.

Count—Bravo! [Aside.] This time at least I have had a success.

Candida [Aside.]—All to revenge myself on that false Evaristo.

Gertrude [Aside.]—I certainly did not think she would consent. I fancied another affection held her, but I see I was wrong.

Scene Eighth

NINA on the terrace. The same.

Nina [Speaks from the terrace.]—She is not here, and I can find her nowhere. Oh, there she is.

Count—Consequently the Signorina Candida marries the Baron del Cedro.

Nina [Aside.]—What do I hear? What will she answer?

Gertrude—She will do it as soon as the conditions—

Count [To Candida.]—What conditions do you put?

Candida—None, sir; I will marry him in any case.

Count—Excellent Signorina Candida! I like you thus. [Aside.] Ah, when I have to do with matters, all goes swimmingly.

Nina [Aside.]—But this is a terrible business! Poor Signor Evaristo! It is useless for me now to give the fan to Signorina Candida. [Exit.

Gertrude [Aside.]—I deceived myself. She loves the Baron, and I thought her attracted to Signor Evaristo.

Count—If you will allow me, I will go and give this good news to the Baron, to my dear friend, my dear colleague.

Gertrude—And where is the Baron?

Count—He expects me at the apothecary's. Do as I

beg. Go to the house, and I will conduct him to you at once.

Gertrude—What do you say, niece?

Candida—Yes, he may speak with you.

Count—And with you?

Candida—I will do whatever my aunt wishes.—
[Aside.] I shall die, but I shall die avenged.

Count—I go at once. Expect us, we will come to you. As the hour is so advanced, it would not be amiss if you invited him to dinner.

Gertrude—What! the first time!

Count—Oh, these are exaggerated considerations. He will gladly accept. I answer for him, and to induce him, I will stay too. [Exit.]

Gertrude—Let us go, then, and await them.

Candida—Yes, let us go.

Gertrude—What is the matter with you? Do you do it willingly?

Candida—Yes, willingly.—[Aside.] I have given my word, it is irremediable.

Gertrude [Aside.]—Poor child, I pity her! In these cases, notwithstanding one's love, one feels confused. [Goes toward the villa.]

Scene Ninth

Nina—[From the terrace.]—Oh, Signorina Candida!

Candida [Angrily.]—What are you doing here?

Nina—I came to look for you.

Candida—Go away, and do not presume to set foot in our house again!

Nina—What! this affront to me?

Candida—What affront? You are an unworthy creature, and I cannot and will not tolerate you longer. [Exit into villa.]

Gertrude [Aside.]—This is a little too severe.

Nina—I am amazed, Signora Gertrude.

Gertrude—I am indeed sorry for the mortification you have had, but my niece is a person of good judgment, and if she has treated you ill, she must have her reasons.

Nina—What reasons can she have? I am astonished at her.

Gertrude—Come, come, do not forget your respect; do not raise your voice.

Nina—I will go and seek justification.

Gertrude—No, no, stay here. It is of no use now, do it later.

Nina—And I tell you, I will go now!

Gertrude—Do not presume to pass this door. [Places herself on the threshold.]

Scene Tenth

The same. Enter the COUNT and the BARON from the apothecary shop, they approach the villa.

Count—Come, come, let us go.

Baron—I must go.

Gertrude [To Nina.]—Impudent girl! [Goes in and shuts the door at the moment the Count and the Baron are about to enter. She does not see them. Nina goes away angry. The Count remains speechless, looking at the closed door.]

Baron—What, they shut the door in our faces!

Count—In our faces? No, it is impossible!

Baron—Impossible, you say! But it is a fact.

Nina—This insult to me! [Walks to and fro, trembling.]

Count—Let us go and knock.

Nina [Aside.]—If they go in, I will get in too.

Baron—No, stay; I wish to know more. I do not wish to expose myself to fresh insults. You have served

me ill. They have laughed at you, and made fun of me on your account.

Count [Hotly.]—What way of speaking is this?

Baron—And I demand satisfaction!

Count—From whom?

Baron—From you.

Count—In what manner?

Baron—With the sword!

Count—With the sword! But I have been twenty years in this village, and I no longer use a sword.

Baron—With pistols, then. [Draws two pistols from his pocket.]

Nina [Running toward the house.]—Pistols! hi, murder! here! pistols! They are murdering each other.

Scene Eleventh

The same. GERTRUDE on the terrace.

Gertrude—But, gentlemen, what is this?

Count—Why did you bolt the door in our faces?

Gertrude—I? Excuse me, I am incapable of such a vile action with whomsoever it should be; how little, then, with you and the Baron, who deigns to condescend to my niece!

Count [To the Baron.]—You hear?

Baron—But, Madame, at the very moment we wished to enter, the door was closed in our faces.

Gertrude—I assure you I did not see you. I closed the door to hinder that saucy girl Nina from entering.

Nina [Puts her head out of her own door.] What? saucy! saucy yourself!

Count—Quiet that impudent girl!

Gertrude—Will you enter, pray? I will give orders that the door be opened.

Count [To the Baron.]—You hear?

Baron—I have nothing more to say.

Count—What will you do with these pistols?

Baron—Excuse my acute sense of honor. [Puts away the pistols.]

Count—And you mean to present yourself to ladies with two pistols in your pocket?

Baron—I always carry them in the country for self-defense.

Count—But if they knew you had these pistols—you know what women are—they would not come near you.

Baron—You are right. Thank you for warning me, and, as a sign of good friendship, allow me to present them to you. [Draws one from his pocket and presents it.]

Count [Nervously.]—A present to me?

Baron—Yes; surely you will not refuse it?

Count—I accept it because it comes from your hands. But they are not loaded?

Baron—What a question! Do you expect me to carry empty pistols?

Count—Wait! Ho there, the house!

Limoncino [From out his shop.]—What do you wish, sir?

Count—Take these pistols and keep them till I ask you for them.

Limoncino—At your service. [Takes the pistols from the Baron.]

Count—Take care, they are loaded!

Limoncino [Laughs.]—Oh, I know how to manage them.

Count—Take care, no nonsense!

Limoncino [Aside.]—The Count is courageous, truly.

Count—I thank you, and shall value them.—[Aside.] To-morrow I will sell them.

Tognino [From the villa.]—Gentlemen, my mistress expects you.

Count—Let us go.

Baron—Yes, let us go.

Count—Well, what do you say? Am I a man of my word? Ah, dear colleague, we noblemen—our protection is worth something.

[Nina comes out of her house softly, and goes behind them to enter. Tognino has let the Count and the Baron pass, and remains on the threshold. Nina tries to enter. Tognino stops her.]

Tognino—You have nothing to do here.

Nina—Yes, but I have.

Tognino—My orders are not to let you pass. [Goes in and shuts the door.]

Nina—I am furious!—I feel choking with rage! This insult to me—to a girl of my kind! [Stamps with rage.]

Scene Twelfth

Enter EVARISTO from the street, his gun on his shoulder, and MORACCHIO with a gun in his hand and bag with game, and the dogs tied by a cord.

Evaristo—Here, take my gun, and keep those partridges till I dispose of them. [Seats himself before the café.]

Maracchio—Never fear, I will take care of them.—[To Nina.] Is dinner ready?

Nina—Quite ready.

Moracchio—What on earth is the matter? You are always angry with all the world, and then complain of me.

Nina—Oh, it's true, we are relatives, there is no gain-saying it.

Moracchio—Come, let us go in and dine. It is time.

Nina—Yes, yes, go. I will come later.—[Aside.] I wish to speak to Signor Evaristo.

Maracchio—Yes, come; if not, I shall eat all. [Goes into the house.]

Nina—If I ate now, I should eat poison.

Evaristo [Aside.]—No one on the terrace! Probably they are at dinner. It is better that I should go to the inn; the Baron expects me. [Rises.] Well, Nina, nothing new to tell me?

Nina—Oh, yes, sir, I have something to tell you.

Evaristo—Have you given my fan?

Nina—Here it is, your accursed fan!

Evaristo—What does this mean? Why could you not give it?

Nina—I have received a thousand insults, a thousand impertinences, and have been chased from the house like a good-for-nothing.

Evaristo—Then Signora Gertrude noticed it?

Nina—Oh, not only Signora Gertrude. The greatest insults came from Signorina Candida.

Evaristo—But why? What did you do to her?

Nina—I did nothing to her, sir.

Evaristo—You told her you had a fan for her?

Nina—How could I tell her when she never gave me time, but sent me off like a thief?

Evaristo—But there must be some reason.

Nina—For my part, I know I have done nothing to her. But all this ill-treatment, I am sure, I am certain, has come to me because of you.

Evaristo—Because of me? The Signorina Candida, who loves me so much!

Nina—Does the Signorina Candida love you so much?

Evaristo—There is no doubt about it. I am sure of it.

Nina—Oh, yes, I too can assure you that she loves you much, much, much!

Evaristo—You put me into a terrible agitation.

Nina [Ironically.]—Go, go and seek your lady-love, your dear one.

Evaristo—And why should I not go?

Nina—Because the place is taken!

Evaristo [Anxiously].—By whom?

Nina—By Baron del Cedro.

Evaristo—The Baron is in the house?

Nina—Why should he not be in the house, seeing he is to marry the Signorina Candida?

Evaristo—Nina, you dream—you are raving! you talk nothing but absurdities!

Nina—You don't believe me? Well, go and see, and you will know whether I speak the truth.

Evaristo—In Signora Gertrude's house?

Nina—In Signorina Candida's.

Evaristo—The Baron!

Nina—Del Cedro.

Evaristo—Marries Signorina Candida!

Nina—I have seen it with these eyes, and heard it with these ears.

Evaristo—It cannot be! It is impossible! You talk nonsense.

Nina—Go, see for yourself. Listen, and you will soon learn whether I talk nonsense.

Evaristo—I will see at once! [Runs to the villa and knocks.]

Nina—Poor fool! he trusts in the love of a city girl. The city girls are not as we are.

[Evaristo goes on knocking. Tognino opens and looks out of the door.]

Evaristo—Well, what is it?

Tognino—Excuse me, I can let no one pass.

Evaristo—Have you told them it is I?

Tognino—I have.

Evaristo—To Signorina Candida?

Tognino—To Signorina Candida.

Evaristo—And Signora Gertrude does not wish that I should come in?

Tognino—Yes, Signora Gertrude has said you might pass, but Signorina Candida did not wish it.

Evaristo—Did not wish it? I swear to Heaven I will come in! [Tries to push aside Tognino, who bolts the door.]

Nina—Well, and what did I tell you?

Evaristo—I am beside myself! I do not know in what world I am. To shut the door in my face!

Nina—Oh, do not be amazed! They treated me in the same courteous way.

Evaristo—How is it possible Candida could thus deceive me?

Nina—What is a fact cannot be doubted.

Evaristo—I still do not believe it—I cannot believe it—I never will believe it!

Nina—You do not believe it?

Evaristo—No; there must be some mistake, some mystery. I know Candida's heart. She is incapable of this!

Nina—Very well. Console yourself that way, and enjoy your consolation. Much good may it do you!

Evaristo—I absolutely must speak to Candida.

Nina—But since she won't receive you?

Evaristo—It does not matter. There must be some other reason! I will go into the café. It will be enough for me to see her, to hear a word from her. Only a sign from her will suffice to assure me of life or to give me my death-blow.

Nina—Well, take it.

Scene Thirteenth

CORONATO and SCAVEZZO return. SCAVEZZO goes straight to the inn. CORONATO remains aside to listen.

Evaristo—What do you wish to give me?

Nina—Why, your fan!

Evaristo—Keep it. Don't torment me.

Nina—You give me this fan?

Evaristo—Yes, yes, keep it, I give it you.—[Aside.]
I am beside myself!

Nina—If it is so, I thank you.

Coronato [Aside.]—Ho! ho! now I know what the present was! A fan. [Goes to the inn without being seen.]

Evaristo—But if Candida won't let me see her—if by chance she does not look out of the window—if, seeing me, she refuses to listen to me—if her aunt forbids her! I am in a sea of confusion, of agitation.

[Crispino, with a sack full of leather and shoes on his shoulder, goes toward his booth. Seeing the two, he stops to listen.]

Nina—Dear Signor Evaristo, you make me sad; I am deeply grieved for you.

Evaristo—Yes, my good girl, I deserve your pity.

Nina—So good, amiable, and polite a gentleman.

Evaristo—You know my heart, you bear testimony to my love.

Crispino [Aside.]—Nice things these! I see I came in time.

Nina—Indeed, if I knew how to comfort you—

Crispino [Aside.]—Better and better!

Evaristo—Well, at all costs I will try my luck. I shall not to have to reproach myself that I neglected to clear up the matter. I go to the café, Nina; I go and tremble. Keep for me your friendship and good-will. [He takes her hand, and goes into the café.]

Nina—On the one hand he makes me laugh, on the other I am sorry for him.

[Crispino puts down his sack, pulls out some shoes, puts them on the bench, and goes into his shop without speaking.]

Nina—Why, here is Crispino! Welcome back! Where have you been until now?

Crispino—Don't you see? To buy leather and to take shoes for mending.

Nina—But you do nothing but mend old shoes. I would not have people say—you know they are so ill-natured here—

Crispino—Evil tongues will find 'more to say about you than about me.

Nina—About me! What can they say?

Crispino—What do I care what they say—that I am more of a cobbler than a shoemaker? It is enough for me to be an honest man, and to earn my bread righteously. [He sits down and works.]

Nina—But I don't want to be called the cobbleress.

Crispino—When?

Nina—When I shall be your wife.

Crispino—Eh?

Nina—Eh! What does this *Eh'* mean? what does this *Eh'* mean?

Crispino—It means that Signorina Nina will be neither cobbleress nor shoemakeress; she has aims most vast and grand.

Nina—Are you mad, or have you drunk this morning?

Crispino—I am not mad, I have not drunk, but I am neither blind nor deaf.

Nina—Then what the devil do you mean? Explain yourself if you would have me understand you.

Crispino—I am to explain myself! You would have me explain myself? Do you think I have not heard your fine words with Signor Evaristo?

Nina—With Signor Evaristo?

Crispino [Imitates Evaristo.]—Yes, my good girl, you know my heart; you bear testimony to my love.

Nina [Laughs.]—You silly fellow!

Crispino [Imitates Nina.]—Indeed, if I knew how to comfort you—

Nina [Laughs.]—Silly fellow, I say!

Crispino [Imitates Evaristo.].—Nina, keep for me your friendship and good-will.

Nina [Laughs still more.].—Sillier than ever!

Crispino—I?

Nina—Yes, absurd; madly absurd!

Crispino—But, by Jove, did I not see, did I not hear your beautiful conversation with Signor Evaristo?

Nina—Silly boy, I tell you!

Crispino—And what you replied.

Nina—Silly boy!

Crispino—Nina, have done with this “silly,” or I shall go silly in very deed. [Threatens her.]

Nina—Eh! eh! [Becomes serious, and changes her tone.] But do you really think Signor Evaristo loves me?

Crispino—I know nothing about it.

Nina—Come here. Listen. [Speaks rapidly.] Signor Evaristo loves Signorina Candida; and Signorina Candida has thrown him over, and means to marry the Baron. And Signor Evaristo is desperate, and came to pour out his heart to me; and I pretended to be sympathetic to make fun of him, and he let himself be comforted that way. Do you understand now?

Crispino—Not a word.

Nina—Are you persuaded of my innocence?

Crispino—Not entirely.

Nina—Then, if things are thus, go to the devil with you! Coronato desires me, seeks me; my brother has promised me to him. The Count, who respects me, implores—I shall marry Coronato.

Crispino—Come, come, don't be so angry instantly. Can you assure me you speak the truth—that there is nothing between you and Signor Evaristo?

Nina—And you do not wish me to call you silly! But, my own good Crispino, whom I love so much, my dear betrothed! [She caresses him.]

Crispino [Gently.]—And what did Signor Evaristo give you?

Nina—Nothing.

Crispino—Nothing? nothing? nothing?

Nina—When I tell you nothing, nothing.—[Aside.] I do not wish him to know about the fan, or he will suspect me again.

Crispino—Can I be sure?

Nina—Come, come, you tease me.

Crispino—You love me?

Nina—Yes, I love you.

Crispino—Well, then, let us make peace. [He takes her hand.]

Nina [Laughs.]—Silly fellow.

Crispino [Laughs.]—But why silly?

Nina—Because you are.

Scene Fourteenth

/ Enter CORONATO, from the inn.

Coronato—At last I know what present Signorina Nina has had.

Nina—What business is that of yours?

Crispino [To Coronato.]—From whom has she had a present?

Coronato—From Signor Evaristo.

Nina—It is not true.

Coronato—But it is, and I know, too, what it is.

Nina—Well, be it what it may, it does not concern you. I love Crispino, and shall be the wife of my Crispino.

Crispino [To Coronato.]—Well, what is the present?

Coronato—A fan.

Crispino [Angrily to Nina.]—A fan?

Nina [Aside.]—Confound that fellow!

Crispino [To Nina.]—Did you receive a fan?

Nina—It is not true.

Coronato—It is so true that you have it in your pocket.

Crispino—I wish to see that fan.

Nina—No, no!

Coronato—I will find the means to make her show it.

Nina—You are an interfering fellow.

Scene Fifteenth

Enter MORACCHIO from the house, eating, with a napkin in his hand.

Moracchio—What's all this noise about?

Coronato—Your sister has had a fan given her, it is in her pocket, and she denies it.

Moracchio [Sternly.]—Give me that fan.

Nina—Leave me alone.

Moracchio—Give me that fan, or, I swear by Heaven—
[Threatens her.]

Nina—Confound you all! Here it is.

Crispino [Tries to take it.]—I want it.

Coronato—No; I.

Nina—Leave me alone, I say!

Moracchio—Quick, give it here. I want it.

Nina—No; rather than to you or Coronato, I will give it to Crispino.

Moracchio—Give it to me, I say!

Nina—To Crispino. [Gives the fan to Crispino, and runs into the house.]

Coronato—Give it here.

Moracchio—Give it here.

Crispino—You shall not have it.

[Both fall on Crispino to get it from him. He escapes from the scene, they follow him.]

Scene Sixteenth

The COUNT on the terrace. TIMOTEO outside his shop.

Count—Hi! Signor Timoteo!

Timoteo—What do you command?

Count—Quick, quick, bring spirits and cordials! Signorina Candida has fainted!

Timoteo—Instantly. [Returns into the shop.]

Count—What was she looking at? One would think some poisonous plants grew in the garden of the café.

[Exit.

[Crispino crosses the stage, running from right to left. Coronato and Moracchio run after him, and all three disappear.]

Baron [From the villa to the apothecary.]—Quick, quick, Signor Timoteo!

Timoteo [Advancing with various vials and cups.]
—Here I am.

Baron—Quick, quick!

Timoteo—Very well! Immediately! [Goes up to the door.]

[Enter Crispino, Coronato, Moracchio, run furiously across the stage from left to right, knock against Timoteo, throw him down, breaking all his bottles. Crispino falls over him and loses his hold of the fan. Coronato snatches it up and runs off. Timoteo gets up and returns to his shop.]

Coronato [To Moracchio.]—Here it is, here it is! I have it!

[Exit.

ACT III

Scene First

Crispino comes out of his shop, with bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine, seats himself on the bench, and breakfasts. Tognino comes out of Gertrude's villa with a broom, and crosses to the pharmacy. Coronato and Scavezzo come out of the inn; the latter carries a barrel on his shoulders; the former passes Crispino, looks at him and laughs. Then both go off. Crispino looks after him and clenches his fist. Tognino, issuing from the pharmacy, sweeps the square. Timoteo, with glasses and bottles, hurries across to the villa. Crispino has emptied his wine bottle and goes into the inn. Susanna comes out of her shop, seats herself to do some needlework. Tognino goes into the villa. Crispino comes back, his bottle refilled. He draws the fan from his pocket, looks at it smiling, and seats himself again. Nina also seats herself outside her door to spin. Crispino hides the fan under his leather apron and goes on eating. Coronato comes back, passes Crispino and smiles. Crispino smiles also. Coronato, arrived at his own door, turns round once more to look at Crispino and smiles, then enters. Crispino laughs too, takes up the fan, looks at it with pleasure, and then hides it again.

Enter COUNT and BARON from GERTRUDE'S villa.

Count—No excuse! my friend, that should not vex you.

Baron—I assure you it doesn't please me either.

Count—If Signorina Candida felt ill, that was an accident; you must excuse it. You know women are subject to vapors and nervous attacks.

Baron—But when we went in she was not ill, and hardly did she see me when she retired to her room.

Count—Because she felt it coming on.

Baron—And then, did you notice Signora Gertrude when she came out of her niece's room, with what attention, what interest she read some papers that looked like letters.

Count—She has much business on her hands, and a large correspondence. Doubtless they were letters just arrived.

Baron—No; they were old papers. I'll wager anything they were something she had found either on the table or on the person of Signorina Candida.

Count—Dear friend, your suspicions are strange! Your imagination runs away with you!

Baron—I imagine that which doubtless is the case. I suspect that an understanding exists between Signorina Candida and Evaristo.

Count—Impossible! Were it so, I should know it. I know everything! Nothing is done in the village that I do not know! And further, were it as you think, do you suppose Signorina Candida would ever have accepted your proposal? How can you suppose she would thus compromise the mediation of a nobleman of my standing?

Baron—Oh, for that a good reason can be found. She was forced to say "Yes," but Signora Gertrude was not as amiable to me after reading those letters; indeed, she seemed to me to show pleasure that we should go.

Count—Well, I think that all we have to complain of against Signora Gertrude is, that she did not ask us to stay to dinner with her.

Baron—To that I am indifferent.

Count—I gave her some hints, but she pretended not to understand.

Baron—I assure you she was most eager we should leave.

Count—I am sorry for you. Where shall you dine to-day?

Baron—I told the host to prepare dinner for two.

Count—For two?

Baron—I expect Evaristo, who has gone shooting.

Count—If you will come and dine with me—

Baron—With you?

Count—But my dinner is half a mile from here.

Baron—Thank you, but my dinner is already ordered.
Hi there, Coronato!

Scene Second

Enter CORONATO from the inn. The same.

Coronato—You called me?

Baron—Has Signor Evaristo returned?

Coronato—I have not seen him yet, sir. I am sorry, because the dinner is ready, and the food will spoil.

Count—Evaristo is capable of amusing himself shooting till evening, and making you lose your dinner.

Baron—What can I do? I promised to wait for him.

Count—Well, it's all very well to wait for him up to a certain point. But, my dear friend, it does not seem to me you should wait long for a person who is your social inferior. I admit the demands of politeness, of humanity; but, my dear colleague, let us also preserve our aristocratic decorum.

Baron—I feel half^d inclined to ask you to come and take Evaristo's place.

Count—If you do not wish to wait for him, or if you dislike eating alone, come to my house and take pot-luck.

Baron—No, no, my dear Count. Do me the pleasure of dining with me. Let us go to table, and if Evaristo is not punctual, that is his loss.

Count [Pleased.]—It will teach him politeness.

Baron [To Coronato]—Tell them to serve.

Coronato—Yes, sir. [Aside.] H'm, h'm! there'll be little left for the kitchen now.

Baron—I will go and see that they have prepared for our dinner. [Enters the inn.]

Count [To Coronato.]—Have you taken the second barrel of wine?

Coronato—Yes, sir, I sent it to your house.

Count—You sent it! without going with it? I fear mischief.

Coronato—I will tell you. I accompanied the man as far as the turn of the road, where we met your servant.

Count—My steward?

Coronato—No, sir.

Count—My footman?

Coronato—No, sir.

Count—My lackey?

Coronato—No, sir.

Count—Who then?

Coronato—That man who lives with you, and sells your fruit, salad, vegetables.

Count—What! that man?

Coronato—Just so. I met him, showed him the barrel, and he accompanied my servant.

Count [Aside.]—The devil! that fellow, who never sees wine, is capable of drinking up half the barrel. [Goes toward the door.]

Coronato—Excuse me.

Count—What is it?

Coronato—Have you spoken for me to Nina?

Count [Embarrassed.]—Oh, yes, that is quite right.

Coronato—Quite right?

Count [Advancing toward the door.]—We will speak about it later.

Coronato—But tell me one thing.

Count—Come, come, let me go in, so as not to keep the Baron waiting.

Coronato [Aside.]—I have good hopes. He is a man, if he takes up a cause, to succeed with it—sometimes— [In loving yet harsh tones.] Nina! Nina!

[Nina spins on and does not reply.]

Coronato—Allow me at least to salute you.

Nina [Without looking up.]—You would do better to give me back my fan.

Coronato—Indeed!—[Aside.] Oh, by-the-by, I left that fan in the cellar!—Yes, yes, let us speak of that fan.— [Aside.] I hope no one has carried it off. [Goes into the house.]

[Crispino laughs aloud.]

Susanna—You seem to have a light heart, Crispino, you laugh so merrily.

Crispino—I laugh because I have my reasons for laughing.

Nina [To Crispino.]—You laugh, while I feel gnawed with anger.

Crispino—Anger? And what are you angry about?

Nina—That that fan should be in Coronato's hands.

Crispino [Laughs.]—Yes, it is in Coronato's hands.

Nina—Then why do you laugh?

Crispino—I laugh because it is in Coronato's hands. [Gets up and carries the remains of his meal into his workshop.]

Nina—What silly laughter!

Susanna—I never thought my fan would pass through so many hands.

Nina [Looks at her with amazement.]—Your fan?

Susanna—Oh, I say my fan because it came from my shop.

Nina—I suppose you were paid for it?

Susanna—Of course, else I should not have given it.

Nina—And it will also have been paid double its worth?

Susanna—Not so; and even were it so, what does it

matter to you? For what it cost you, you can accept it.

Nina—How do you know what it cost me?

Susanna [Sarcastically and pointedly.]—Oh, I don't know what it cost you, nor whether he who gave it you has great obligations toward you.

Nina—What obligations? What do you mean by obligations? Do I meddle in your affairs?

Susanna—There, there, don't excite yourself! You don't intimidate me with your fury!

Crispino [From the shop.]—What's the matter? Incessant bickerings, incessant high words!

Susanna—She says hateful things, and expects one to keep silent.

Crispino—Are you angry, Nina?

Nina—I angry? I am never angry!

Susanna—Oh, she loves peace, and never excites herself!

Nina—Never, except when I am teased, if I have to hear impertinences, if I am trampled under foot.

[Susanna mutters to herself.]

Crispino—Is it I who ill-treat you, tease you, trample you under foot?

Nina [Spins sulkily.]—I am not speaking of you.

Susanna—No, she does not refer to you, she refers to me.

Crispino—One might really say it is an art to live for five minutes in peace in this square.

Nina—When evil tongues are abroad.

Crispino—Quiet! it is shameful.

Susanna—One is to be insulted, and then not speak.

Nina—I speak reasonably.

Susanna—Better I should be silent.

Nina—Certainly it is better to be silent than say foolish things.

Crispino—You will always have the last word.

Nina—Yes; and were I in my grave—

[Enter Timoteo from the villa, with cups and bottles.]

Nina—He who wants me, takes me as I am, and who does not want me, leaves me alone!

Crispino—Do be quiet!

Timoteo [Aside.]—I won't go again into that house. Is it my fault that these waters don't help? I can only give what I have. They expect to find all the refinements of town in a village. And then what are spirits, cordials, essences? So many quack remedies. The cornerstones of an apothecary are, water, quinine, mercury. [Goes into his shop.]

Crispino—Some one must be ill at the villa.

Nina [With contempt.]—Yes, that dear jewel of a Signorina Candida!

Susanna—Poor Signorina Candida!

Crispino—What is the matter with her?

Susanna [Pointedly.]—Nina should know something about it.

Nina—I? What have I to do with it?

Susanna—Because she is ill on your account.

Nina—On my account! [Springs to her feet.]

Susanna—Oh, one cannot speak quietly with you.

Crispino—I should like to know what all this means.

[Gets up from his work.]

Nina [To Susanna.]—You say nothing but silly things!

Susanna—There, there, don't excite yourself.

Crispino [To Nina.]—Let her speak

Nina—Well, speak, then.

Susanna—I won't say anything more to you!

Nina—If you have any sense of honor, speak.

Susanna—If matters are thus, I will.

Crispino—Quiet there! Signora Gertrude is approaching. No scenes before her.

Nina—She shall give me an explanation!

Scene Third

Enter GERTRUDE from the villa. The same.

Gertrude [Gravely.]—Is your brother returned?

Nina [Ungraciously, and turning away.]—Yes, he is.

Gertrude [As above.]—Has Signor Evaristo returned also?

Nina [As above.]—Yes, he has.

Gertrude—Do you know where he is?

Nina [With annoyance.]—I know nothing! Good day.

[Enters the house.]

Gertrude—What manners!—Crispino!

Crispino [Rises.]—Madame?

Gertrude—Do you know where to find Signor Evaristo?

Crispino—No, Madame, in truth I do not.

Gertrude—Do me the favor to go and see if he is in the inn.

Crispino—Certainly. [Goes toward the inn.]

Susanna [Softly.]—Signora Gertrude!

Gertrude—What would you?

Susanna—One word.

Gertrude—Do you know nothing about Signor Evaristo?

Susanna—Ah, Madame, I know many things. I have many things to tell you.

Gertrude—Alas! I too have much to disquiet me; I have seen letters that surprise me! Speak, enlighten me if you can.

Susanna—But here, in public! Shall I not come to your house?

Gertrude—I wish first to see Signor Evaristo.

Susanna—Will you, then, step into my shop?

Gertrude—Yes, rather let us do that. But first let us await Signor Evaristo.

Susanna—There he is!

Crispino [From the inn.]—He is not there. They expected him to dinner, and he has not come.

Gertrude—Yet he must have come back from shooting.

Crispino—Oh, yes, he came back; I saw him.

Gertrude—Where can he be?

Susanna—He is not at the café either.

Crispino—Nor at the apothecary's.

Gertrude—Let us search a little. The village is not so large. Look about, we must discover him.

Crispino—I will set off at once!

Gertrude—If you find him, tell him I desire to speak to him, and that I wait for him in Susanna's shop.

[Crispino goes.]

Gertrude [Enters Susanna's shop.]—Now I am ready and anxious to hear you.

Susanna—Well, well, you will hear nice things.

Crispino—There is something wrong about this Signor Evaristo. And then this fan—I am glad I have got it. Coronato noticed it was gone, I suppose. He is hardly likely to suspect me. No one will have told him that I went to buy some wine. I went just in time. I found the fan on top of the barrel. Silly fellow! And while his man filled my flask, I pocketed the fan! I shall take pretty good care not to confess that I took it. He is capable of calling me a thief. But where am I to look for this gentleman? Not at the Count's, for he is dining in there. In the village? I am sorry I am not enlightened as to Susanna's meaning. But I will get to the bottom of it. And if I find Nina guilty—Well, and what shall I do then? Cast her off? I don't know. I love her too much. What can it all mean?

Scene Fourth

Enter CRISPINO and LIMONCINO from the café. Then enter CORONATO.

Crispino—Do you know where Signor Evaristo is?

Limoncino—I! why should I? I am not his servant.

Crispino—Don't excite yourself thus. Might he not happen to be at your place?

Limoncino—Then you would see him.

Crispino—Out upon you, you lemonade seller!

Limoncino—What does this mean?

Crispino—Wait till your shoes want cobbling again.
[Exit.]

Limoncino—The wretch! Shall I tell him Signor Evaristo is in our garden? No, he is only just comforted, why disturb him again? Hi, host!

Coronato [At his door.]—What would you?

Limoncino—Signor Evaristo sends me. Tell the Baron he is not to wait dinner for him; he is busy, and does not wish to be disturbed.

Coronato—Tell him the notice comes too late. The Baron has nearly finished his dinner.

Limoncino—Very well. [About to go.]

Coronato—And if you hear that some one has found a fan, let me know.

Limoncino—With pleasure. Have you lost one?

Coronato—Yes, I don't know how. A rogue carried it off, and my stupid cellarman can't tell me who came to fetch wine. But if I discover him, then—Good-day.

[Exit.]

Limoncino—I will do my best.

[Exit.]

Scene Fifth

The same. The COUNT at the window of the inn.

Count—I heard Limoncino's voice. Hi, Limoncino!

Limoncino—Sir?
Count—Two cups of coffee!
Limoncino—Excuse me, for whom?
Count—For me and the Baron. [Disappears.]
Limoncino—At once!—[Aside.] Now I know the Baron is inside and pays, he shall have the coffee.
Nina—Hi, Limoncino!
Limoncino—And what do you want?
Nina—Is Signor Evaristo still with you?
Limoncino—How with me?
Nina—Yes, with you.
Limoncino—There is the café; if he were there, you would see him.
Nina—Bah! I mean in the garden.
Limoncino—Bah! I don't know anything. [Exit.
Nina—Rude fellow! And people say I am irritable! How can I help it, when all tease, all maltreat me?—those ladies, that creature over there, Coronato, Moracchio, Limoncino, and Crispino. I can bear it no longer.

Scene Sixth

Enter EVARISTO, running excitedly out of the café.

Evaristo [To Nina.]—There she is, there she is! Now I am happy!

Nina—What does this joy mean?

Evaristo—Oh, Nina, I am the happiest, the most delighted man in the world!

Nina—I am glad to hear it. I hope, then, you will make up to me for all I have had to endure on your account.

Evaristo—Anything you wish! Know, Nina, that they suspected that I loved you. Signorina Candida knew I had given you the fan, thought I had bought it for you, was jealous of me, was jealous of you!

Nina—Was jealous of me?

Evaristo—Precisely; and to avenge herself, and in despair, she was about to marry another. She saw me, and fell down lifeless in a faint. Happily, a moment after her aunt left the house, Candida went into the garden. I climbed over the hedge, sprang over the wall, fell at her feet, wept, swore, implored, called all the saints to witness, and convinced her. She is mine, mine, and will be mine in all eternity!

Nina—I congratulate you. I am glad to hear it, sir.

Evaristo—One condition only she makes in order to be quite convinced of my love.

Nina—And that is?—

Evaristo—In order that I may justify myself and you also, it is necessary that you give her the fan.

Nina—Oh, dear, oh, dear!

Evaristo—My honor and your own are at stake. It would seem otherwise as if I had really bought the fan for you. She must be relieved of every suspicion. I know you are a sensible girl, therefore give me back that fan.

Nina—But, sir, I have it no longer.

Evaristo—Why tell this lie? I gave it you, and I would not ask it back did not my whole life's happiness hang on it. I will buy you another, far better and more beautiful. But, for Heaven's sake, give me back that fan, and quickly too!

Nina—Oh, if I but had it!

Evaristo—Nina, I repeat, our honor is at stake.

Nina—I swear I no longer have the fan!

Evaristo—Heavens! And what did you do with it?

Nina—Oh, they knew I had the fan, and forced me to give it up by violence.

Evaristo—Who?

Nina—My brother.

Evaristo [Goes toward the house and calls.]—Moracchio!

Nina—No, stop! He has not got it!

Evaristo—Who then?

Nina—He gave it to Crispino.

Evaristo [Runs toward the workshop.]—Crispino!

Nina—Stop and listen, I say!

Evaristo—I am beside myself.

Nina—Crispino no longer has it either.

Evaristo—Heaven and hell, who has it then? Quick!

Nina—That rogue of a Coronato.

Evaristo—Coronato! hi, host, Coronato!

Coronato—Yes, sir?

Evaristo—Give here that fan.

Coronato—What fan?

Nina—That which you stole.

Evaristo—Out with it! Quick!

Coronato—Sir, I am sincerely sorry, but—

Evaristo—How so? What is this?

Coronato—I can no longer find it.

Evaristo—Not find it!

Coronato—I stupidly forgot it in the cellar, and went away. When I came back, it had vanished. Some one must have stolen it.

Evaristo—Look for it!

Coronato—I have searched the whole house, in vain.

Evaristo—I will pay you whatever you like for it!

Coronato—But if it is gone—I tell you it is gone.

Evaristo—I am in despair!

Coronato—I am most sorry, but I can do nothing.

[Exit.

Evaristo—It is all your fault! You are my misfortune!

Nina—I? And how am I to blame in it all?

Scene Seventh

The same. CANDIDA on the terrace.

Candida [Calling him.]—Signor Evaristo!

Evaristo—There she is, there she is! Oh, I am in despair!

Nina—What, what! the world is not come to an end because of this!

Candida [Calls more loudly.]—Signor Evaristo!

Evaristo—Oh, Candida, my dearest! I am the most miserable, the most wretched man in the world!

Candida—What! you can't get the fan?

Nina [Aside.]—She guesses it at once!

Evaristo—If you knew what a coil of complications, and all to my injury! It is too true, the fan is lost, and it is not possible to find it as yet.

Candida—Oh, I know where it is!

Evaristo—Where? where? If you could give us some hint!

Nina [To Evaristo.]—Who knows? Some one may have found it.

Candida—The fan is in the hands of her to whom you gave it, and who will not give it up, and she is right.

Nina [To Candida.]—This is not true.

Candida—Be silent!

Evaristo—I swear to you on my honor—

Candida—It is enough! My decision is made! I am astonished at you, to prefer a peasant girl to me. [Exit.

Nina—Peasant girl! What does she mean?

Evaristo—I swear to Heaven, you are the cause of all my miseries, which will be my death! She has decided! Well, I have decided too; I will await my rival here, and will challenge him. Either he or I must fall! And all this is your fault, Nina!

Nina—I go, or I shall lose my reason. [She turns slowly toward her house.]

Evaristo—How passion consumes me! My heart thumps, my brain is in a whirl, my breath comes heavily. I can hardly stand! Oh, who will help me? [He staggers toward a chair.]

Nina [Turns round and sees him.]—What is this? What do I see? He is dying! Help, help! Here, Moracchio! here, Limoncino!

Scene Eighth

Enter LIMONCINO from the café with two cups on a tray. MORACCHIO runs from his house to succor EVARISTO.

Crispino [Enters from side street.]—Oh, there is Signor Evaristo. But what is the matter?

Nina—Water, water!

Crispino—Wine, wine!

Limoncino—Give him wine. I will just carry these cups to the inn.

Moracchio—Courage, courage, sir! He is in love; that is his malady.

Timoteo [Comes out of his shop.]—What is the matter?

Moracchio—Come here, Timoteo.

Nina—Yes, do you help.

Timoteo—What is the matter?

Nina—He has fainted.

Timoteo—There I can help.

Nina—The poor gentleman, he is in love.

Crispino [With a bottle of wine.]—Here, here! that will restore him to life—five-year-old wine.

Nina—He is reviving!

Crispino—Oh, this wine would make the dead rise!

Moracchio—Courage, courage, sir, I say!

Timoteo [With bottles, glasses, and a razor.]—Here I am. Quick, undress him!

Moracchio—What is the razor for?

Timoteo—In case of need, it is better than a lancet.

Crispino—A razor?

Nina—What?

Evaristo [Gets up.]—Oh, ho! who wants to cut my throat with a razor?

Nina—The apothecary.

Timoteo—Excuse me; I am an honest man, and no assassin. When one has the best intentions, it is not right to make one appear ridiculous. See whether I will come another time. [Exit.]

Moracchio—Won't you step into my house, sir, and rest on my bed?

Evaristo—Wherever you like.

Moracchio—Take my arm and lean on me.

Evaristo—Oh, how much rather I would that my miserable life were ended! [Walks off, leaning on Moracchio.]

Nina [Aside.]—If he wanted to die, he could not have done better than give himself up to the apothecary.

Moracchio—Here we are at the door. Let us go in.

Evaristo—Useless kindness to him who only asks to die. [They enter.]

Moracchio—Nina, get the bed ready for Signor Evaristo.

Crispino [As she is about to enter, calls her.]—Nina!

Nina—What is it?

Crispino—You are wonderfully compassionate for this gentleman.

Nina—I do my duty, because you and I are the cause of his illness.

Crispino—Speak for yourself, there I can't answer. But I? What have I to do with him?

Nina—Because of that accursed fan. [Goes in.]

Crispino—Accursed fan, indeed! I have now heard it named millions of times! But I am glad to think I tricked Coronato. He is my enemy, and will be so till Nina is my wife. But what now? I could bury this fan in the ground; but if it be trodden on, it will break. What shall I do with it. [Pulls out the fan.]

[Limoncino crosses from his café to the inn.]

Count [From the inn.]—The dinner was excellent! For once I have eaten my fill.

Crispino [Aside.]—Ho, ho, the Count! Shall I— Yes, that will be the best way. [Advances toward him, fan in hand.]

Count—What is that you have in your hand?

Crispino—A fan. I found it on the ground.

Count [Takes it.]—A lady must have lost it in passing by. What will you do with it?

Crispino—I really don't know.

Count—Do you wish to sell it?

Crispino—Sell it? I should not know what to ask for it. What may it be worth?

Count—I don't know, for I don't understand such things. There are figures painted on it; but a fan found in the country can't be worth much.

Crispino—I wish it were worth very much.

Count—In order to sell it well?

Crispino—No, certainly not; but only in order to offer it to your honor.

Count—To me! You wish to give it to me?

Crispino—But as it seems of no value—

Count—Oh, no; it is not bad, and seems quite decent. Thank you, my friend. Whenever I can be of use to you, count on my protection.—[Aside.] I shall give it away.

Crispino—But one thing I beg of you.

Count [Aside.]—Didn't I think so! This class of people gives nothing for nothing!—Well, what is it? Speak.

Crispino—I beg you to tell no one that I gave it to you.

Count—Is that all?

Crispino—All.

Count—If it's nothing but that— [Aside.] He is cautious. But, my good friend, why should people not know? Have you perchance stolen it?

Crispino—Excuse me. I am not capable of that.

Count—Then why should no one know it comes from you? If you have found it, and the owner does not turn up, I don't see why—

Crispino [Laughs.]—And yet I have my reasons.

Count—And they are?—

Crispino—Well, I am in love.

Count—I know it. With Nina.

Crispino—And if Nina knew I had this fan, and did not give it to her, she would be angry.

Count—Just as well for her not to have it. This is no fan for a country girl. Do not fear; I shill not betray you. But that reminds me, how do matters stand with you and Nina? Do you really mean to marry her?

Crispino—I confess I desire her as my wife.

Count—Well, then, you shall have her. This very evening, if you like, we will celebrate the wedding.

Crispino—Really, you are in earnest?

Count—In earnest. Who am I? What is meant by my protection? I am almighty!

Crispino—But Coronato wants her also.

Count—Coronato! Who is Coronato? A stupid fellow! Does she love you?

Crispino—Yes, dearly.

Count—Good, then: you are loved, Coronato is not. Depend upon my protection.

Crispino—Most certainly. But—her brother?

Count—Brother! what brother? what of him? If the

sister is satisfied, the brother has nothing to say. Depend entirely on my protection.

Crispino—By Saint Crispin!

Count—There now, go back to your work, that my shoes may get done at last.

Crispino—As your honor desires.

[Count examines the fan.]

Crispino [Aside.]—The devil! I forgot that Signora Gertrude sent me to look for Signor Evaristo, and now I have found him and not told her. But his illness—the fan—in short, I forgot! I will call him, but I don't like to go to Moracchio's house. I will go to the Signora Gertrude and tell her Signor Evaristo is found, and she is to have him called, only not by me. [Goes toward the draper's shop.]

Count—What can it cost? Not much. Were it more choice, I would give it to Signorina Candida, who broke her own. But why should I not? It is not half bad

Nina [At the window.]—Where is Crispino? Not there!

Count—The figures are badly painted, but it seems to me they are well drawn.

Nina—Oh, what do I see! The fan is in the Count's hands! Quick, quick, to wake Signor Evaristo!

Count—And who refuses a gift? She shall have it.

Scene Ninth

The COUNT. Enter the BARON from the inn. Then enter TOGNINO.

Baron—What you abandon me?

Count—I saw you were not inclined to talk.

Baron—Yes, it is true. I can't resign myself. Tell me, do you think we might go now and try to see those ladies once more.

Count—Why not? I have a happy thought! Shall I make you a present—a present that will make you cut a good figure in Signorina Candida's eyes?

Baron—What is this present?

Count—You know she broke her fan this morning.

Baron—Yes, I heard of it.

Count—Here is a fan—Let us go and find her and give her this one from you. [Gives it to the Baron.] Look, it is not ugly.

Baron—You advise me then to—

Count—Yes, you give it. I do not wish to have any merit in the matter. I leave all the honor to you.

Baron—I gladly accept this excuse, but you will at least let me know what it cost?

Count—Oh, a trifle.

Baron—Nevertheless, kindly tell me the price.

Count—But to what end? Did you not give me a present of two pistols?

Baron—I do not know what to say. Well, I accept your present gratefully.—[Aside.] Where did he find this fan? It seems to me impossible that he bought it.

Count—Well, what do you say to it? Isn't it a pretty thing? And just in the nick of time! Oh, I understand these things. I have much experience. I am well provided. I have a whole room full of knickknacks for ladies. But do not let us waste time. Let us go. [Rings at Signora Gertrude's house.]

Tognino [From the terrace.]—What do you wish, gentlemen?

Count—Will the ladies receive us?

Tognino—Signora Gertrude is out, and Signorina Candida is resting in her room.

Count—Let us know as soon as she is awake.

Tognino—Yes, sir. [Exit.]

Count—Did you hear?

Baron—Well, we must just wait. I have to write a

letter to Milan; I will go and write it at the apothecary's. If you will come too—

Count—No; I don't like going to that man's house. Go and write your letter, and I will wait here till the servant calls us.

Baron—Very well. As soon as you want me, I am at your service.

Count—Count on me, do not fear.

Baron [Aside.]—I do not count on him, and less on the aunt, and still less on the niece. [Goes to Timoteo's.]

Count—I will amuse myself with my book, with my beautiful collection of wonderful fables. [Pulls out his book, seats himself, and reads.]

Scene Tenth

The COUNT Enter EVARISTO from NINA'S house.

Evaristo—Oh, there he is still! I thought he was gone. I can't think how I was able to fall asleep amid so much distress of mind. Fatigue—exhaustion. Now, with the hopes of having back the fan, I feel born anew. —[Calls.] Count, your servant.

Count [Reading and smiling.]—Your servant, Signor Evaristo.

Evaristo—Will you permit me to say a few words?

Count [As above.]—In a moment I am at your disposal.

Evaristo [Aside.]—If he has not that fan in his hand, I don't know how to begin speaking about it.

Count [Gets up laughing, and pockets his book.]—Here I am, at your service.

Evaristo [Searching with his eyes for the fan.]—I should be sorry if I have disturbed you.

Count—It does not matter, I will finish reading my fable another time.

Evaristo [As above.]—I should not like you to think me impertinent.

Count—What are you looking at? Have I anything queer about me?

Evaristo—Excuse me, I was told you had a fan.

Count [Confused.]—A fan! It is true. Was it perchance you who lost it?

Evaristo—Yes, sir, I lost it.

Count—But there are many fans in the world. How do you know it is yours?

Evaristo—If you would have the kindness to show it to me?

Count—My friend, I am sorry you come too late.

Evaristo—How too late?

Count—The fan is no longer in my possession.

Evaristo—What?

Count—No; I gave it away.

Evaristo—And pray to whom?

Count—That is just what I would rather not tell you.

Evaristo—Count, I must know! I must have back that fan, and I will know who has it now!

Count—I will not tell!

Evaristo—Heavens and earth, but you shall tell!

Count—Do not forget who I am!

Evaristo [Angrily.]—I say it, and I will maintain it! This is an ungentlemanly action!

Count—Do you know that I have a pair of loaded pistols?

Evaristo—What do I care about your pistols? I want my fan!

Count—How absurd! So much eagerness and noise for a bit of fan which is worth perhaps five paoli!

Evaristo—Let it be worth whatever it is worth, you cannot know that for me it is priceless. I would give twenty ducats to have it!

Count—You would give twenty ducats!

Evaristo—If I tell you so, I promise it! If you can get it back, I will gladly sacrifice twenty ducats!

Count [Aside.]—The devil! It must be painted by Titian or Raphael of Urbino.—I will see if I can get you back the fan.

Evaristo—If the owner likes to sell it for twenty ducats, I repeat I am willing.

Count—Had I the fan, such a proposal would offend me.

Evaristo—But perhaps it will not offend its present owner.

Count—Perhaps, who knows? My friend, I assure you, I am quite confused.

Evaristo—Let us do this, Count. Here is a gold snuff-box whose weight alone represents a worth of more than twenty ducats. Its workmanship makes it worth twice as much. Never mind; for that fan I will willingly give this box. Here it is!

Count [Holding the box in his hand.] Are there perhaps diamonds on that fan? I noticed nothing.

Evaristo—It is not of the least value, but it is of worth to me.

Count—Then I must try to satisfy you.

Evaristo—I beg of you!

Count—Await me here.—[Aside.] I am quite confused.—But am I to give the box in exchange?

Evaristo—Yes, yes, give it!

Count—Wait. [Walks a few steps.] And if the person gives me the fan, and does not want the box?

Evaristo—I have given it to you. Do what you like with your property.

Count—In earnest?

Evaristo—In earnest.

Count [Aside.]—After all, the Baron is a gentleman and my friend. Because of the twenty ducats I would not accept it, but a gold snuff-box—that gives an aristo-

cratic, refined, well-to-do air.—[Aloud.] Wait for me here. [Goes into the pharmacy.]

Evaristo—To justify myself in her eyes I would sacrifice my life, my heart's blood!

Scene Eleventh

Enter CRISPINO from SUSANNA'S shop. Then enter the COUNT, then NINA.

Crispino—Oh, there he is! Sir, your servant. Signora Gertrude wishes to speak with you. She is here in the shop, and begs you to have the kindness to step in there. She expects you.

Evaristo—Tell her I am at her service in one moment. I must urgently speak to some one before.

Crispino—Yes, sir. And how are you now—better?

Evaristo—Much better, I am glad to say.

Crispino—I am delighted to hear it. And Nina is well?

Evaristo—I think so.

Crispino—She is a good girl, is Nina.

Evaristo—Yes, indeed, and I know she loves you dearly.

Crispino—And I love her too, but—

Evaristo—But what?

Crispino—I have been told certain things.

Evaristo—Concerning me, perhaps?

Crispino—To say the truth, yes, sir.

Evaristo—I am a gentleman, and your Nina is a good, honest girl.

Crispino—I think so too. There are always evil tongues about.

[Enter the Count from the pharmacy.]

Evaristo—There now! Go to Signora Gertrude and tell her I shall come directly.

Crispino—Yes, sir. [Walks away.] I feel easy now

- that nothing is wrong here.—[Aloud, as he passes the Count.] I commend myself to you in behalf of Nina.

Count—Count on my protection!

Crispino—I desire it earnestly. [Goes into the shop.]

Evaristo—Well, Count?

Count—Here is the fan. [Shows it to him.]

Evaristo [Seizes it eagerly.] Oh, what happiness! How greatly I am obliged to you!

Count—Look whether it be yours.

Evaristo—Beyond a doubt. [Wishes to move off.]

Count—And the snuff-box?

Evaristo—Do not let us name that. I am but too grateful. [Off to Susanna's shop.]

Count—What it means, not to understand things perfectly! I thought it a common fan, and now it seems it is worth so much—so much, in fact, that it is worth exchanging against a solid gold snuff-box. No doubt the Baron would have liked the box. He was vexed that I asked for the fan, but when I said I would present it in his name, he was mollified a little. I will now go and buy one like it.

Crispino [Returning.]—Well, this job is done. I like to serve Signora Gertrude. So you give me good hopes, Count?

Count—Most excellent hopes! To-day is a fortunate day for me, and all I do in it succeeds.

Crispino—Let us hope this will succeed too.

Count—Most undoubtedly! Hi, Nina!

Nina [Comes out of her house testily.] What do you want now?

Count—Do not be so angered so quickly. I want to do you a service. I want to find a husband for you.

Nina—I don't need you for that.

Count—Some one to your taste.

Nina—And I say no!

Count—Crispino.

Nina—Crispino?

Count—Aha, what do you say now?

Nina—With all my heart!

Count—There, Crispino, you see what my protection means!

Crispino—Yes, sir, I see.

Scene Twelfth

Enter MORACCHIO from the house.

Moracchio—What are you doing here?

Nina—What does it matter to you?

Count—Nina is going to be married under the ægis of my protection.

Moracchio—As you like, sir; and she must consent, whether she like it or no.

Nina [Gravely.] Oh, I will consent dutifully.

Moracchio—The better for you!

Nina—And to show you I consent, I will give my hand to Crispino.

Moracchio [Amazed.]—But—Count—

Count [Placidly.]—Let them be.

Moracchio—But, Count, did you not give your word to Coronato?

Scene Thirteenth

Enter CORONATO from the inn.

Coronato—Who is talking about me?

Moracchio—Come here, and behold! The Count wants my sister to marry—

Coronato [Anxiously.]—Count!

Count—I am a just man and a nobleman, a sensible protector and humane. Nina does not want you, and I cannot, and must not, and will not use violence!

Nina—And I want Crispino, though the whole world oppose it!

Coronato [To Moracchio.]—And what say you?

Moracchio [To Coronato.]—And what say you?

Coronato—I don't care a fig! Who does not want me, does not deserve me!

Nina—That is the saying.

Count [To Crispino.] See the results of my protection!

Coronato—Count, I have sent the second barrel of wine.

Count—Bring me the bill, and I will pay it. [While speaking, he pulls out the gold snuff-box, and ostentatiously takes snuff.]

Coronato [Aside.]—He has a gold snuff-box—he can pay. [Exit.

Moracchio [To Nina.]—Well, you have had your way after all.

Nina—So it seems.

Moracchio—And if you repent, it will be your affair.

Count—She will never need to repent. She has my protection.

Moracchio—Bread seems to me better than protection. [Exit.

Count—And when shall we hold the wedding?

Crispino—Soon.

Nina—Yes, soon.

Scene Fourteenth

Enter BARON, from the pharmacy.

Baron—Well, Count, have you seen Signorina Candida, and have you given her the fan? Why would you not let me have the pleasure of giving it to her myself?

Nina [Aside.]—What! Signor Evaristo has not got it!

Count—I have not yet seen Signorina Candida, and as for the fan, I have others, and have destined a better one for her. Oh, here is Signora Gertrude!

Scene Fifteenth

Enter GERTRUDE, EVARISTO and SUSANNA, from SUSANNA'S shop.

Gertrude [To Susanna.]—Do me the favor of telling my niece to come down. I must speak to her.

Susanna—I go at once. [Goes to the villa, knocks, they open, she enters.]

Gertrude [Softly to Evaristo.]—I do not wish the Count and the Baron to go into the house.

Count—Signora Gertrude, the Baron and I were just about to visit you.

Gertrude—I am obliged for the polite attention. The evening is fine, we can talk out of doors.

Baron—So you have come back, Signor Evaristo?

Evaristo [Curtly.]—As you see.

Scene Sixteenth

The same CANDIDA.

Candida—What does my aunt wish?

Gertrude—Let us take a few turns.

Candida [Aside.]—Why, there is the false Evaristo!

Gertrude—But why have you no fan?

Candida—Don't you remember I broke mine this morning?

Gertrude—Ah, yes, true, if we could find another.

Baron [Whispers to Count]—Now is the proper time to give it.

Count [Aside.]—No, not in public.

Gertrude—Signor Evaristo, you do not happen by chance to have one?

Evaristo—Here it is, at your service. [He shows it to Gertrude, but does not give it to her. Candida turns aside contemptuously.]

Baron [Softly to the Count.]—Your fan! out with your fan!

Count [As above.]—Don't poke me so!

Baron [As above.]—Out with it, I say!

Count [As above.]—Not now, not now!

Gertrude—Niece, won't you accept Signor Evariso's polite offer?

Candida—No, aunt, excuse me; I don't need it.

Count [To Baron.]—You see, she does not accept it!

Baron [To Count.]—Give it me at once!

Count [To Baron.]—Do you mean to pick a quarrel?

Gertrude—May I ask why you will not accept this fan?

Candida—Because it is not mine; because it was not meant for me. It would not become either you or me were I to accept it.

Gertrude—Signor Evaristo, can you answer this?

Evaristo—I can if I may.

Candida—Excuse me. [Turns to leave.]

Gertrude—Stay here! I command it. [Candida obeys.]

Baron [To Count.]—What is all this imbroglia?

Count [To Baron.]—I know nothing about it all.

Evaristo—Susanna, do you know this fan?

Susanna—Yes, sir. It is that you bought from me this morning. I most imprudently concluded you had bought it for Nina. I must confess I was wrong, but appearances were against you, for in truth you gave the fan to the girl.

Evaristo—Nina, why did I give you that fan?

Nina—That I might give it to Signorina Candida; but when I went to do so, the ladies would not let me speak, and turned me out of the house. I then wanted to give

it back to you, and you would not have it, so I gave it to Crispino.

Crispino—And I fell down, and Coronato took it.

Evaristo—But where is Coronato? How did it leave Coronato's hands?

Crispino—Don't call him! As he is not there, I will tell the truth. I was annoyed, went into the inn to fetch wine, saw it lying about, and carried it off.

Evaristo—And what did you with it then?

Crispino—I gave it to the Count.

Count—And I gave it to the Baron.

Baron [Contemptuously.]—And then took it back again!

Count—Yes, and restored it to Signor Evaristo.

Evaristo—And I present it to Signorina Candida.

[Candida accepts it with a deep curtsey, smiling sweetly.]

Baron—What comedy is all this? what complication have we here? Am I made ridiculous through your fault?

Count—I swear to Heaven, Signor Evaristo, I swear to Heaven—

Evaristo—Come, come, Count, do not distress yourself. We are friends. Give me a pinch of snuff.

Count [Offers him the box.]—Yes, I am like that; if I am treated well, I don't excite myself.

Baron—You may not, but I do.

Gertrude—Baron!

Baron—And you, too, helped to make me ridiculous.

Gertrude—Excuse me; you don't know me, sir. I have not failed in my engagements. I listened to your proposals, my niece heard and accepted them, and I consented with pleasure.

Count [To the Baron.]—You hear? That was because I spoke.

Baron [To Candida.]—And you, Signorina Candida, why did you give me hope? why did you deceive me?

Candida—I must ask your forgiveness, sir. I was torn by two conflicting passions. The desire for revenge made me wish to be yours, and love gives me back to Evaristo.

Count—I did not know this.

Gertrude—And if you had been a bolder lover and a sincerer friend, you would not have found yourself in this case.

Baron—It is true. I confess my passion, I condemn my weakness; but I despise the friendship and conduct of the Count. [He salutes and moves off.]

Count—There, there, it is nothing. Let us be friends. We are joking. Among colleagues these things are understood. Come, let us think of these weddings.

Gertrude—Let us go into the house, and I hope all will be arranged to universal satisfaction.

[Candida fans herself.]

Gertrude—Are you contented to have that much-desired fan in your hands?

Candida—I cannot express the measure of my content.

Gertrude—A great fan! It has turned all our heads, from the highest to the lowest.

Candida [Susanna.]—Is it from Paris, this fan?

Susanna—Yes, from Paris; I guarantee it.

Gertrude—Come, I invite you all to supper, and we will drink to this fan, which did all the harm and brought about all the good.

AN ODD MISUNDERSTANDING

AN ODD MISUNDERSTANDING

(Un Curioso Accidente)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

FILIBERTO, a rich Dutch merchant.

GIANNINA, his daughter.

RICCARDO, a broker.

COSTANZA, his daughter.

DE LA COTTERIE, a French lieutenant.

MARIANNA, Mademoiselle Giannina's maid.

GASCOIGNE, De la Cotterie's servant.

The Scene is at The Hague, in the house of FILIBERTO.

ACT I

Scene First

GASCOIGNE, packing his master's trunk.

Enter MARIANNA

Marianna—May I wish good-morning to Monsieur Gascoigne?

Gascoigne—Yes, my sweet Marianna, I thank you for your good-morning, but good-night would be more agreeable to me from your lips.

Marianna—From what I see, I should rather wish you a pleasant journey.

Gascoigne—Oh, my precious jewel, such a melancholy departure must be followed by a most doleful journey!

Marianna—Then you are sorry to go?

Gascoigne—How can you doubt it? After enjoying your delightful society for six months, can I leave you without the deepest regret?

Marianna—And who forces you to do what is so disagreeable?

Gascoigne—Do you not know? My master.

Marianna—Masters are not wanting at The Hague, and you can easily find one who will give you better wages than a poor French officer, a prisoner of war, and a man in every way roughly used by fortune.

Gascoigne—Pardon me, such language does not become so good a girl as you. I have for many years had the honor of serving my excellent master; his father, I may say, recommended me to him; I have attended him in war, and, to show my fidelity, have not shunned danger. He is poor, but never had man a better heart. Should he be promoted, I am sure I should share his

good fortune. Would you wish me to abandon him, and let him return to France without me?

Marianna—You speak like the worthy fellow you are; and I cannot conceal my affection for you.

Gascoigne—Dear Marianna, I am as much distressed as you, but I hope to see you again, and then to be able to say: Here I am, I can support you, and, if you wish it, I am yours.

Marianna—Heaven grant it! But why is the Lieutenant in such haste to depart? My master is fond of his company, and I think his daughter not less so than her father.

Gascoigne—Too true; and that is his reason for going.

Marianna—What! does he dislike people to be fond of him?

Gascoigne—Ah, my Marianna, my poor master is desperately in love with your young mistress; he leads the most wretched life in the world; he knows their love for each other is increasing every day, and, as they can no longer hide it, he fears for himself, and for Mademoiselle Giannina. Your master is rich, and mine is poor. Monsieur Filiberto has this only daughter, and will not give her to a younger son, a soldier; one, in short, who would have to live on her means. The Lieutenant, though poor, is a man of honor; he respects the obligations of hospitality, of friendship, of good faith; he fears he may be overcome and seduced by love, and that he in turn may draw his mistress from her duty. This being the case, he does violence to his feelings, sacrifices love to principle, and is resolved to go.

Marianna—I admire his heroic conduct, but could not imitate it.

Gascoigne—We must exert self-control.

Marianna—You can do so more easily than I.

Gascoigne—Indeed, a man's resolution is stronger than a woman's.

Marianna—Say, rather, his affections are weaker.

Gascoigne—So far as regards me, you are wrong.

Marianna—I look at deeds, not words.

Gascoigne—What can I do to convince you of my love?

Marianna—Monsieur Gascoigne does not need me for a teacher.

Gascoigne—Do you wish me to marry you at once, before I go?

Marianna—That would, indeed, remove all doubt.

Gascoigne—But then I should have to leave you.

Marianna—And could you have the heart to abandon me?

Gascoigne—Oh, you might go with me!

Marianna—That would be much better.

Gascoigne—To encounter so many hardships?

Marianna—In truth, that would not suit me nearly so well.

Gascoigne—Should I remain here with you, would that satisfy you?

Marianna—Perfectly.

Gascoigne—For how long?

Marianna—A year at least.

Gascoigne—And after a year, would you let me go?

Marianna—Yes, a year after our marriage, if you found it easy to do so.

Gascoigne—I daresay you would let me go after a month.

Marianna—I know better.

Gascoigne—I am sure of it.

Marianna—Let us try.

Gascoigne—My master is coming; another time we will talk it over.

Marianna—Ah, Monsieur Gascoigne, this conversation has unnerved me; do what you please, I trust to you.—
[Aside] Indeed, I know not what I say. [Exit.]

Gascoigne—If I had not more sense than she, the folly would have been committed before this.

Enter DE LA COTTERIE

De la Cotterie [To himself.]—Oh, heavens! how wretched I am! how unfortunate!

Gascoigne—The trunk, sir, is packed.

De la Cotterie—Ah, Gascoigne! I am in despair.

Gascoigne—Alas! what misfortune has happened?

De la Cotterie—The worst that could befall me.

Gascoigne—Our troubles seldom come alone.

De la Cotterie—Mine is alone, but so great that I cannot support it.

Gascoigne—I suppose you allude to your love?

De la Cotterie—Yes; but it has increased to such a degree that I have no longer firmness enough to resist it.

Gascoigne—What if the lady is unconcerned at your departure, and does not love you as you imagine she does?

De la Cotterie—On the contrary, she is more affectionate, and more devoted to me than ever. Oh, what will my despair drive me to? I saw her weep.

Gascoigne—Well, this is bad enough, but I thought it was something much worse.

De la Cotterie—Inhuman! unfeeling! vile plebeian soul! can you imagine anything worse in the world than the tears of a tender-hearted, distressed lady, who accuses me of cruelty, who makes my resolution waver, and puts to a severe trial my honor, my reputation, and my friendship?

Gascoigne—I am not conscious of deserving so harsh a reproof; this is a just recompense for ten years' service!

De la Cotterie—Ah! put yourself in my place, and then, if you can, condemn my transports. My wounds,

my blood, my being a prisoner of war, which prevents my promotion, the narrowness of my fortune, all appear nothing in comparison with the love that inflames my soul. The excellent principles of the young lady prevented her from assuring me that I possessed her heart, and in consequence I resolved to leave her. But, ah! at the moment of taking leave, tears and sobs prevented her from speaking, and they proved her love was equal to mine. My wretchedness is extreme; my resolution seems barbarous; and now I am frantic with love, and reason appears to desert me.

Gascoigne—Take time, sir; remain here Monsieur Filiberto is the best man in the world; in Holland they pride themselves on their hospitality, and our host takes the greatest interest in you, and in your health. You are not perfectly cured, and this is a good reason for not going.

De la Cotterie—I will think over what you say; very little would change my determination.

Gascoigne—With your leave, I will at once unpack the trunk. [Unpacks.]

De la Cotterie. [Aside.]—What will they say if I remain after taking my leave?

Gascoigne [Aside.]—Marianna will not be sorry for this.

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—If I allege I am unwell, my sadness will make it appear so.

Gascoigne [Aside.]—Nor indeed am I.

De la Cotterie—But the longer I remain, the more my love increases; and what remedy can there be for it? what hope is there for my desperate passion?

Gascoigne—Time accomplishes wonders. [Still unpacking.]

De la Cotterie—How much better to meet death at once than to live in such torture!

Gascoigne—My master will be obliged to me.

De la Cotterie—What shall I do?

Gascoigne—The trunk is unpacked, sir.

De la Cotterie—Who told you to unpack it?

Gascoigne—I said I was about to do it, and you did not forbid me.

De la Cotterie—Blockhead! pack the clothes. I shall go

Gascoigne—Well, whatever happens, let them remain now.

De la Cotterie—Do not make me angry.

Gascoigne—I will repack them this evening.

De la Cotterie—Do it at once, and order the post-horses at twelve o'clock.

Gascoigne—And the tears of Mademoiselle?

De la Cotterie—Wretch! have you the heart to torment me?

Gascoigne—My poor master!

De la Cotterie—Indeed, I am an object of compassion.

Gascoigne—Let us stay.

De la Cotterie—No.

Gascoigne—Shall I pack the things, then?

De la Cotterie—Yes.

Gascoigne [Aside.]—How I pity him [Puts the clothes in the trunk.]

De la Cotterie—Can I leave this house without seeing her again?

Gascoigne [Aside.]—While he continues in this state of mind, we shall never be done.

De la Cotterie—By leaving her, I fear my love will not leave me.

Gascoigne—Alas, poor master! [Looks out.] What do I see?

De la Cotterie—What is the matter? Why do you stop?

Gascoigne—I am going on, sir.

De la Cotterie—You are confused?

Gascoigne—A little.

De la Cotterie—What are you looking at?

Gascoigne—Nothing.

De la Cotterie—Oh, Heaven! Mademoiselle Giannina!
What an encounter! What do you advise me to do?

Gascoigne—I do not know; any course is dangerous.

De la Cotterie—Do not leave me.

Gascoigne—I will not

De la Cotterie—I will go away.

Gascoigne—As you please.

De la Cotterie—I cannot.

Gascoigne—I pity you.

De la Cotterie—Why does she stop? Why does she
not come in?

Gascoigne—She is afraid of disturbing you.

De la Cotterie—No; it is because you are here.

Gascoigne—Then I will go. [About to go.]

De la Cotterie—Stay.

Gascoigne—I will remain, then.

De la Cotterie—Have you the snuff-box? bring it.

Gascoigne—I will go for it. [Exit.]

De la Cotterie—Hear me! where are you going? Poor
me! Gascoigne! [Calls.]

Enter GIANNINA

Giannina—Are you in want of anything?

De la Cotterie—Excuse me, I want my servant.

Giannina—If yours is not here, there are others. Do
you want any one?

De la Cotterie—No, I thank you; my trunk must be
packed.

Giannina—And are you disturbed in this manner about
so trifling an affair? do you fear there will not be time?
Perhaps you are already expecting horses? If the air
of this country is not favorable to your health, or rather
if you are tired of us, I will myself hasten forward your
departure.

De la Cotterie—Mademoiselle, have compassion on me; do not add to my suffering.

Giannina—If I knew the cause of your suffering, instead of increasing, I would endeavor to diminish it.

De la Cotterie—Seek the cause in yourself; there is no need for me to tell you.

Giannina—Then you go away on my account?

De la Cotterie—Yes, it is on your account that I am compelled to hasten my departure.

Giannina—Have I become so odious in your sight?

De la Cotterie—Oh, Heaven! you never appeared to me so lovely; your eyes never beamed with so much tenderness.

Giannina—Ah, were this true, you would not be so eager to go.

De la Cotterie—If I loved only the beauty of your person, I should yield to the strength of my attachment, which bids me stay with you; but I love you for your virtues; I see your peace of mind is in danger, and in return for the kindness you have shown me, I mean to sacrifice the dearest hopes of my life.

Giannina—I do not believe you have so little resolution as not to be able to control your passion, and you do me injustice if you think I cannot resist the inclination of my heart. I own my love for you without a blush: this virtuous love, I feel, will never leave me, and I cannot persuade myself a man is less able than I to sustain with glory the conflict of his passions. I can love you without danger; it is happiness enough for me to see you. You, on the contrary, by determining to depart, go in quest of more easy enjoyment, and show that your obstinacy prevails over your love. It is said hope always comforts the lover. He who will not use the means proves he cares but little for the end, and, if you go, you will still suffer the tortures of disappointed love; you will act either with culpable

weakness, or unfeeling indifference. Whatever cause hurries you away, go, proud of your resolution, but be at least ashamed of your cruelty.

De la Cotterie—Ah, no, Mademoiselle! do not tax me with ingratitude, do not accuse me of cruelty. I thought, by my departure, to do you an act of kindness. If I am wrong, pardon me. If you command it, I will remain.

Giannina—No; my commands shall never control your inclination; follow the dictates of your own heart.

De la Cotterie—My heart tells me to remain.

Giannina—Then obey it without fear; and, if your courage does not fail, rely on my constancy

De la Cotterie—What will your father say to my change of mind?

Giannina—He is almost as much grieved as I at your departure; he is not satisfied about your recovery; and whether it is the consequence of your wound, or of mental affliction, the surgeons do not believe your health is reestablished, and my father thinks it too soon for you to undertake the journey. He loves and esteems you, and would be much pleased at your remaining.

De la Cotterie—Has he any suspicion of my love for you, and that it is mutual?

Giannina—Our conduct has given him no cause for suspicion.

De la Cotterie—Can it be possible it has never passed through his mind that I, an open, frank man, and a soldier, might be captivated by the beauty and merit of his daughter?

Giannina—A man like my father is not inclined to suspicion; the cordiality with which he received you as a guest in his family assures him he may rely on the correct conduct of an officer of honor; and his knowledge of my disposition makes him perfectly easy: he does not deceive himself in regard to either of us. A tender pas-

sion has arisen in our hearts, but we will neither depart from the laws of virtue, nor violate his confidence.

De la Cotterie—Is there no hope that his good heart may make him agree to our marriage?

Giannina—My hope is that in time it will; the obstacles do not arise from motives of interest, but from the customs of our nation. Were you a merchant of Holland, poor, with only moderate expectations, you would immediately obtain my hand, and a hundred thousand florins for an establishment; but an officer who is a younger son is considered among us a wretched match, and were my father inclined to give his consent, he would incur the severe censure of his relatives, his friends, and indeed of the public.

De la Cotterie—But I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of being in a better condition.

Giannina—In the course of time circumstances may occur that may prove favorable to our union.

De la Cotterie—Do you reckon among these the death of your father?

Giannina—Heaven grant that the day may be distant! but then I should be my own mistress.

De la Cotterie—And do you wish me to remain in your house as long as he lives?

Giannina—No, Lieutenant; stay here as long as your convenience permits, but do not appear so ready to go while there are good reasons for your remaining. Our hopes do not depend on the death of my father, but I have reasons to flatter myself that our attachment in the end may be rewarded. Our love we must not relinquish, but avail ourselves of every advantage that occasion may offer.

De la Cotterie—Adorable Giannina, how much am I indebted to your kindness! Dispose of me as you please; I am entirely yours; I will not go unless you order me to do so. Persuade your father to bear with my presence,

and be certain that no place on earth is so agreeable to me as this.

Giannina—I have only one request to make.

De la Cotterie—May you not command?

Giannina—Have regard for one defect which is common to lovers;—do not, I entreat you, give me any cause for jealousy.

De la Cotterie—Am I capable of doing so?

Giannina—I will tell you. Mademoiselle Costanza, in the last few days, has visited our house more frequently than usual; her eyes look tenderly on you, and she manifests rather too much sympathy for your misfortunes. You are of a gentle disposition, and, to own the truth, I sometimes feel uneasy.

De la Cotterie—Henceforth I will use the greatest caution, that she may indulge no hopes, and that you may be at ease.

Giannina—But so conduct yourself, that neither my jealousy nor your love for me shall be remarked.

De la Cotterie—Ah, would to Heaven, Mademoiselle, our troubles were at an end!

Giannina—We must bear them, to deserve good fortune.

De la Cotterie—Yes, dearest, I bear all with this delightful hope. Permit me now to inquire for my servant, to get him to countermand the horses.

Giannina—Were they ordered?

De la Cotterie—Yes, indeed.

Giannina—Unkind one!

De la Cotterie—Pardon me.

Giannina—Let the order be countermanded before my father knows it.

De la Cotterie—My hope and my comfort! may Heaven be propitious to our wishes, and reward true love and virtuous constancy.

[Exit.]

Giannina—I never could have believed it possible for me to be brought to such a step; that I should, of my own accord, use language and contrive means to detain him. But unless I had done so, in a moment he would have been gone, and I should have died immediately afterward. But here comes my father; I am sorry he finds me in our visitor's room. Thank Heaven, the Lieutenant is gone out! All appearance of sorrow must vanish from my face.

Enter FILIBERTO

Filiberto—My daughter, what are you doing in this room?

Giannina—Curiosity, sir, brought me here.

Filiberto—And what excites your curiosity?

Giannina—To see a master who understands nothing of such things and an awkward servant endeavoring to pack a trunk.

Filiberto—Do you know when he goes away?

Giannina—He intended going this morning, but, in walking across the room, his legs trembled so that I fear he will not be able to endure the journey.

Filiberto—I think his present disease has deeper roots than his wound.

Giannina—Yet only one hurt has been discovered by the surgeons

Filiberto—Oh, there are wounds of which they know nothing.

Giannina—Every wound, however slight, makes its mark.

Filiberto—Eh! there are weapons that give an inward wound.

Giannina—Without breaking the skin?

Filiberto—Certainly.

Giannina—How do these wounds enter?

Filiberto—By the eyes, the ears, the touch.

Giannina—You must mean by the percussion of the air.

Filiberto—Air! no, I mean flame.

Giannina—Indeed, sir, I do not comprehend you.

Filiberto—You do not choose to comprehend me.

Giannina—Do you think I have any mischievous design in my head?

Filiberto—No; I think you a good girl, wise, prudent, who knows what ailment the officer suffers from, but who, from a sense of propriety, appears not to know it.

Giannina [Aside.]—Poor me! his manner of talking alarms me.

Filiberto—Giannina, you seem to me to blush.

Giannina—What you say, sir, of necessity makes me blush. I now begin to understand something of the mysterious wound of which you speak; but, be it as it may, I know neither his disease nor the remedy.

Filiberto—My daughter, let us speak plainly. Monsieur de la Cotterie was perfectly cured a month after he arrived here; he was apparently in health, ate heartily, and began to recover his strength; he had a good complexion, and was the delight of our table and our circle. By degrees he grew sad, lost his appetite, became thin, and his gayety was changed to sighs. I am something of a philosopher, and suspect his disease is more of the mind than of the body, and, to speak still more plainly, I believe he is in love.

Giannina—It may be as you say; but I think, were he in love, he would not be leaving.

Filiberto—Here again my philosophy explains everything. Suppose, by chance, the young lady of whom he is enamored were rich, dependent on her father, and could not encourage his hopes; would it be strange if despair counseled him to leave her?

Giannina [Aside.]—He seems to know all.

Filiberto—And this tremor of the limbs, occurring just as he is to set out, must, I should say, viewed philosophically, arise from the conflict of two opposing passions.

Giannina [*Aside.*—I could curse his philosophy!

Filiberto—In short, the benevolence of my character, hospitality, to which my heart is much inclined, humanity itself, which causes me to desire the good of my neighbors, all cause me to interest myself in him; but I would not wish my daughter to have any share in this disease.

Giannina—Ah, you make me laugh! Do I look thin and pale? am I melancholy? What says your philosophy to the external signs of my countenance and of my cheerfulness.

Filiberto—I am suspended between two opinions: you have either the power of self-control, or are practising deception.

Giannina—Have you ever found me capable of deception?

Filiberto—Never, and for that reason I cannot believe it now.

Giannina—You have determined in your own mind that the officer is in love, which is very likely; but I am not the only person he may be suspected of loving.

Filiberto—As the Lieutenant leaves our house so seldom, it is fair to infer his disease had its origin here.

Giannina—Many handsome young ladies visit us, and one of them may be his choice.

Filiberto—Very true; and, as you are with them, and do not want wit and observation, you ought to know exactly how it is, and to relieve me from all suspicion.

Giannina—But if I have promised not to speak of it?

Filiberto—A father should be excepted from such a promise.

Giannina—Yes, certainly, especially if silence can cause him any pain.

Filiberto—Come, then, my dear daughter, let us hear.
[Aside.]—I am sorry I suspected her.

Giannina [Aside.] I find myself obliged to deceive him.
—Do you know, sir, that poor Monsieur de la Cotterie loves to madness Mademoiselle Costanza?

Filiberto—What! the daughter of Monsieur Riccardo?

Giannina—The same.

Filiberto—And does the girl return his affection?

Giannina—With the greatest possible ardor.

Filiberto—And what obstacle prevents the accomplishment of their wishes?

Giannina—Why, the father of the girl will hardly consent to give her to an officer who is not in a condition to maintain her reputably.

Filiberto—A curious obstacle, truly. And who is this Monsieur Riccardo, that he has such rigorous maxims? He is nothing but a broker, sprung from the mud, grown rich amid the execrations of the people. Does he think to rank himself among the merchants of Holland? A marriage with an officer would be an honor to his daughter, and he could not better dispose of his ill-gotten wealth.

Giannina—It seems, then, if you were a broker, you would not refuse him your daughter?

Filiberto—Assuredly not.

Giannina—But, you being a Dutch merchant, the match would not suit you?

Filiberto—No, certainly not; not at all—you know it very well.

Giannina—So I thought.

Filiberto—I must interest myself in behalf of Monsieur de la Cotterie.

Giannina—In what manner, sir?

Filiberto—By persuading Monsieur Riccardo to give him his daughter.

Giannina—I would not advise you to meddle in the affair.

Filiberto—Let us hear what the Lieutenant will say.

Giannina—Yes, you should hear him first.—[Aside.] I must give him warning.

Filiberto—Do you think he will set out on his journey immediately?

Giannina—I know he has already ordered his horses.

Filiberto—I will send directly to see.

Giannina—I will go myself, sir —[Aside.] I must take care not to make matters worse. [Exit.]

Filiberto [Alone.]—I feel I have done injustice to my daughter in distrusting her; it is a happiness to me to be again certain of her sincerity. There may be some concealed deception in her words, but I will not believe her so artful; she is the daughter of a man who loves truth, and never departs from it, even in jest. Everything she tells me is quite reasonable: the officer may be in love with Mademoiselle Costanza; the absurd pride of the father considers the match far below that to which his daughter is entitled. I will, if possible, bring about the marriage by my mediation. On the one hand, we have nobility reduced in circumstances; on the other, a little accidental wealth; these fairly balance each other, and each party will find the alliance advantageous.

Enter MARIANNA

Marianna—Isn't my mistress here, sir?

Filiberto—She is just gone.

Marianna—By your leave. [Going.]

Filiberto—Why are you in such haste?

Marianna—I am going to find my mistress.

Filiberto—Have you anything of consequence to say to her?

Marianna—A lady has asked for her.

Filiberto—Who is she?

Marianna—Mademoiselle Costanza.

Filiberto—Oh! is Mademoiselle Costanza here?

Marianna—Yes, and I suspect, by her coming at this unusual hour, that something extraordinary brings her here.

Filiberto—I know what this extraordinary something is.—[Smiling.] Say to Mademoiselle Costanza that, before she goes to my daughter's room, I will thank her to let me see her here.

Marianna—You shall be obeyed, sir.

Filiberto—Is the Lieutenant in?

Marianna—No, sir, he has gone out.

Filiberto—As soon as he returns, ask him to come to me in this room.

Marianna—Yes, sir. Do you think he will go away to-day?

Filiberto—I am sure he will not.

Marianna—Indeed, his health is so bad that it would be dangerous for him to proceed on his journey.

Filiberto—He shall remain with us, and he shall recover.

Marianna—My dear master, you alone have the power of restoring him to health.

Filiberto—I? How! do you know what is the Lieutenant's disease?

Marianna—I know it; but do you, sir?

Filiberto—I know everything.

Marianna—Who told you?

Filiberto—My daughter.

Marianna—Indeed! [With an expression of surprise.]

Filiberto—Why are you surprised? Would not my daughter be wrong to conceal the truth from her father?

Marianna—Certainly; she has acted most wisely.

Filiberto—Now we can find the remedy.

Marianna—In truth, it is an honorable love.

Filiberto—Most honorable.

Marianna—The Lieutenant is an excellent young man.

Filiberto—Most excellent.

Marianna—His only misfortune is that he is not rich.

Filiberto—A handsome fortune with his wife would indeed make his situation more comfortable.

Marianna—If the father is satisfied, no one has a right to complain.

Filiberto—A father with an only child, when he finds an opportunity of marrying her respectably, ought to be pleased to avail himself of it

Marianna—May God bless you! these are sentiments worthy of so good a man. I am delighted both for the officer and the young lady.—[Aside] And not less so for myself, as my beloved Gascoigne may now remain with me. [Exit.

Enter COSTANZA

Filiberto [To himself.]—Good actions deserve praise, and every person of sense will approve what I am doing.

Costanza—Here I am, sir, at your commands.

Filiberto—Ah, Mademoiselle Costanza! it gives me great pleasure to see you.

Costanza—You are very kind.

Filiberto—I am gratified at your friendship for my daughter.

Costanza—She deserves it, and I love her with all my heart.

Filiberto—Ah, do not say with *all* your heart!

Costanza—Why not? are you not convinced I love her sincerely?

Filiberto—Sincerely, I believe, but not with all your heart.

Costanza—Why should you doubt it?

Filiberto—Because, if you loved my daughter with all your heart, none of it would be left for any one else.

Costanza—You make me laugh! Who should have a part of it?

Filiberto—Ah, Mademoiselle, we understand!

Costanza—Indeed, I do not understand.

Filiberto—Now let us dismiss Lady Modesty, and introduce Lady Sincerity.

Costanza [Aside]—I cannot discover what he is aiming at.

Filiberto—Tell me, have you come on purpose to visit my daughter?

Costanza—Yes, sir.

Filiberto—No, Mademoiselle.

Costanza—For what, then?

Filiberto—Know I am an astrologer. I am visited by a certain spirit that tells me everything, and hence I have learned this: Mademoiselle Costanza has come not to visit those who stay, but those who go away.

Costanza [Aside.]—I suspect there is some truth in what the spirit says.

Filiberto—What! are you puzzled how to answer?

Costanza—I will answer you frankly: even if I have come to show civility to your guest, I do not perceive that I deserve reproof.

Filiberto—Reproof! on the contrary, praise; acts of civility should not be omitted—especially when dictated by a more tender feeling.

Costanza—You seem to be in a humor for jesting this morning.

Filiberto—And you seem to be out of spirits; but I lay a wager I can cheer you up.

Costanza—Indeed?

Filiberto—Without fail.

Costanza—And how?

Filiberto—With two words.

Costanza—And what are those fine words?

Filiberto—You shall hear them. Come this way—a

little nearer. The Lieutenant is not going away. Does not your heart leap at this unexpected news?

Costanza—You amaze me! Monsieur Filiberto, 'do you believe me in love?

Filiberto—Say no, if you can.

Costanza—No—I can say it.

Filiberto—Swear to it.

Costanza—Oh, I will not swear for such a trifle.

Filiberto—You wish to hide the truth from me, as if I had not the power of serving you, or were unwilling to do so, and of serving th poor young man too, who is so unhappy.

Costanza—Unhappy, for what?

Filiberto—On account of you.

Costanza—On account of me?

Filiberto—Yes, you; we are in the dark, so that his love for you is in a manner hidden, and not everyone knows that his despair sends him away.

Costanza—Despair for what?

Filiberto—Because your father, from pride and avarice, will not consent to give you to him: this, my girl, is the whole affair.

Costanza—It appears that you know more of it than I.

Filiberto—You know, and do not choose to know. I make allowance for your modesty; but when a gentleman speaks to you, when a man of my character exerts himself in your behalf, you ought to lay aside modesty and open your heart freely.

Costanza—You take me so by surprise, I am embarrassed what answer to make.

Filiberto—Let us end this conversation. Tell me, like an honest girl as you are, do you not love Monsieur de la Cotterie?

Costanza—You force me to own it.

Filiberto [Aside].—Thank Heaven! so my daughter

spoke the truth.—And he loves you with an equal affection.

Costanza—Of that, sir, I know nothing.

Filiberto—If you do not know it, I tell you so; he loves you to perdition.

Costanza [*Aside.*].—Can it be possible? and he has never declared it to me!

Filiberto—And I have undertaken to persuade your father.

Costanza—But does my father know I am in love with the officer?

Filiberto—He certainly ought to know.

Costanza—He has never mentioned it to me.

Filiberto—Oh, your father will soon come and talk with you on the subject.

Costanza—He has never objected to my coming here, where I meet the officer.

Filiberto—He knows that you are visiting in an honorable house; no greater liberty would be allowed you here than is proper for a modest young lady. In a word, are you willing that I should manage the affair?

Costanza—Entirely willing.

Filiberto—Bravo! this is enough; and what would it avail you to deny with your lips what your looks proclaim? the flame that burns in your heart sparkles in your eyes.

Costanza—You have a most penetrating glance!

Filiberto—Ah, here comes the officer.

Costanza—By your leave, sir.

Filiberto—Where are you going?

Costanza—To Mademoiselle Giannina.

Filiberto—Remain here, if you will.

Costanza—Oh no, sir, excuse me—your servant.—
[*Aside.*] I am overjoyed! I know not in what world I am!

[Exit.]

FILIBERTO, alone

Filiberto—How amusing these girls are! Boldness and modesty are mingled in so strange a manner, that it is a pleasure to observe them. Here is an instance of love to devotion, and if it succeeds it will be owing to my daughter's intervention.

Enter DE LA COTTERIE

De la Cotterie—They told me, sir, that you asked for me.

Filiberto—Have you seen Mademoiselle Giannina?

De la Cotterie—No, sir, I have not seen her.

Filiberto—I am sorry that you appear so melancholy.

De la Cotterie—One whose health is bad cannot be expected to look cheerful.

Filiberto—Do you not know I am a physician, and have the skill to cure you?

De la Cotterie—I did not know that you were skilled in the medical art.

Filiberto—Well, my friend, capacities often exist where they are not expected.

De la Cotterie—Why, then, have you not prescribed for me before?

Filiberto—Because I did not sooner know the nature of your disease.

De la Cotterie—Do you think you know it now?

Filiberto—Yes, certainly—indubitably.

De la Cotterie—If you are learned in the medical art, sir, you know much better than I how fallacious and how little to be relied on are all the symptoms that seem to indicate the causes of disease.

Filiberto—The indications of your disease are so infallible that I am confident there is no mistake, and on condition that you trust to my friendship, you shall soon have reason to be content.

De la Cotterie—And by what process do you propose to cure me?

Filiberto—My first prescription shall be for you to abandon all intention of going away, and to take the benefit of this air, which will speedily restore you to health.

De la Cotterie—On the contrary, I fear this air is most injurious to me.

Filiberto—Do you not know that even from hemlock a most salutary medicine is extracted?

De la Cotterie—I am not ignorant of the late discoveries, but your allusion covers some mystery.

Filiberto—No, my friend; so far as mystery is concerned, each of us is now acting his part; but let us speak without metaphor. Your disease arises from love, and you think to find a remedy by going away, whereas that would be an act of mere desperation. You carry the arrow in your heart, and hope to be relieved; but the same hand that placed it there must draw it out.

De la Cotterie—Your discourse, sir, is altogether new to me.

Filiberto—Why pretend not to understand me! Speak to me as to a friend who loves you and takes the same interest in you as if you were his son. Consider: by dissembling you may destroy your happiness forever. My attachment to you arises from a knowledge of your merit, and from your having spent several months with me; besides, I should be mortified for you to have contracted in my house an unhappy passion; and therefore I most zealously interfere in your favor, and am anxious to find a remedy for you.

De la Cotterie—My dear friend, how have you discovered the origin of my unhappiness?

Filiberto—Shall I say the truth?—my daughter revealed it to me.

De la Cotterie—Heavens! had she the courage to disclose it?

Filiberto—Yes, after a little persuasion she told me everything.

De la Cotterie—Oh, by the friendship you possess for me, have pity on my love!

Filiberto—I have pity on you; I know what human frailty is at your age, and the violence of passion.

De la Cotterie—I confess I ought not to have encouraged my affection, and concealed it from such a friend.

Filiberto—This is the only complaint I have to make. You have not treated me with that unreserved confidence to which I think I was entitled.

De la Cotterie—I had not the courage.

Filiberto—Well, Heaven be praised! There is yet time. I know the girl loves you, for she told me so herself.

De la Cotterie—And what do you say to it, sir?

Filiberto—I approve of the marriage.

De la Cotterie—You overwhelm me with joy.

Filiberto—You see I am the good physician who understands the disease and knows the remedy

De la Cotterie—I can hardly feel assured of this great happiness.

Filiberto—Why not?

De la Cotterie—I thought the narrowness of my fortune an insuperable obstacle.

Filiberto—Family and merit on your side are equal to a rich dower on the other.

De la Cotterie—Your kindness to me is unequalled.

Filiberto—But my kindness has done nothing yet; now it shall be my endeavor to provide for your happiness.

De la Cotterie—This will depend entirely on your own good heart.

Filiberto—We must exert ourselves to overcome the difficulties.

De la Cotterie—And what are the difficulties?

Filiberto—The consent of the father of the girl.

De la Cotterie—My friend, it seems you are making game of me; from the way you spoke just now, I thought all obstacles were removed.

Filiberto—But I have not mentioned it to him yet.

De la Cotterie—To whom have you not mentioned it?

Filiberto—To the father of the girl.

De la Cotterie—Oh, heavens! and who is the father of the girl?

Filiberto—Good! You do not know him? you do not know the father of Mademoiselle Costanza, that horrid savage, Monsieur Riccardo, who has grown rich by usury, and has no idol but his money?

De la Cotterie [*Aside.*—I shall go mad! Thus end all my hopes.

Filiberto—Riccardo does not visit at my house, you never go out, so it is not surprising you do not know him.

De la Cotterie [*Aside.*—Ah! I am obliged to dissemble, not to disclose my love at a moment so unpropitious.

Filiberto—But how did you know the father would not give you his daughter if you did not know him?

De la Cotterie—I had reasons for thinking so, and for my despair there is no remedy.

Filiberto—Am I not your physician?

De la Cotterie—All your attention will be unavailing.

Filiberto—Leave it to me; I will go immediately to find Monsieur Riccardo, and I flatter myself—

De la Cotterie—No, sir, do not.

Filiberto—It seems the prospect of success turns your head; just now you were all joy. Whence arises this sudden change?

De la Cotterie—I am certain it will end unfortunately.

Filiberto—Such despondency is unworthy of you, and unjust to me.

De la Cotterie—Do not add to my unhappiness by your interference.

Filiberto—Are you afraid the father will be obstinate? Let me try.

De la Cotterie—By no means; I am altogether opposed to it.

Filiberto—And I am altogether for it, and will speak to him.

De la Cotterie—I shall leave The Hague; I shall go in a few minutes.

Filiberto—You will not treat me with so much incivility.

Enter GIANNINA

Giannina—Dear father, what is the cause of this dispute?

Filiberto—Monsieur De la Cotterie acts toward me with a degree of ingratitude that is anything but agreeable.

Giannina—Is it possible he can be capable of this?

De la Cotterie—Ah, Mademoiselle, I am a most unfortunate man!

Filiberto—I may say he does not know his own mind. He confessed his passion, and, when I offered to assist him, fell into transports; and then, when I promised to obtain the hand of Mademoiselle Costanza for him, he got furious, and threatened to go away.

Giannina—I am surprised the Lieutenant should still speak of leaving us.

De la Cotterie—Would you have me stay and entertain such hopes? [Ironically.]

Giannina—I would have you stay, and entertain a mistress who loves you. With my father's permission, you

shall hear what Mademoiselle Costanza has just said of you.

Filiberto—May I not hear it?

Giannina—Impossible; my friend directed me to tell it to him alone.

Filiberto [*Aside.*—I shall hear all from my daughter when we are by ourselves.

Giannina [*Aside to De la Cotterie.*—I have contrived to make my father believe you were in love with Mademoiselle Costanza. As you love me, say it is so, and talk no more of going away.

De la Cotterie [*Aside.*—Oh, the stratagems of love!

Filiberto—Will you still persist in your obstinacy?

De la Cotterie—Ah, no, sir; I rely on your kindness.

Filiberto—Do you desire me to speak to Monsieur Riccardo?

De la Cotterie—Do what you please.

Filiberto—Are you still anxious to go?

De la Cotterie—I promise you to remain here.

Filiberto [*Aside.*—What magic words have wrought this change? I am curious to hear them.

De la Cotterie—Pardon, I pray you, my strange conduct.

Filiberto—Willingly; the actions of lovers are often extravagant. Tell me, Giannina, is Mademoiselle Costanza gone?

Giannina—No, sir; she is waiting in my rooms.

Filiberto—Go, Lieutenant, and keep her company for a little while.

De la Cotterie—I would rather not, sir.

Giannina—Go, go.—[*Aside to De la Cotterie.*] Listen! Wait for me in the antechamber; I will be there presently.

De la Cotterie—I shall obey you, sir. [Exit.]

Filiberto [*Aside.*] The power of words!—Well, what did you say to him?

Giannina—I told him to go to his mistress; that she expected him.

Filiberto—But the first time you spoke to him?

Giannina—I said that Mademoiselle Costanza had hope she could persuade her father.

Filiberto—Why did you not tell him so openly, before me?

Giannina—Things said in private often make the greatest impression.

Filiberto—Perhaps so.

Giannina—By your leave [Going.]

Filiberto—Where are you going?

Giannina—To encourage this timid gentleman.

Filiberto—Yes, by all means; I recommend him to you.

Giannina—Doubt not I shall take good care of him.

[Exit.]

Filiberto—My girl has a good heart, and mine is like hers.

ACT II'

Scene First

The Sitting-room of GIANNINA

COSTANZA, alone, seated

Costanza—Who would ever have thought Monsieur De la Cotterie had such a liking for me? It is true he has always treated me with politeness, and been ready to converse with me; but I cannot say I have observed any great signs of love. Now I have always loved him, but have not had courage enough to show it. I flatter myself he too loves me, and for the same reason conceals it; in truth a modest officer is a strange animal, and it is hard to believe in its existence. Monsieur Filiberto

must have reasons for what he says, and I am well pleased to think him not mistaken, especially as I have no evidence that he is so. Here comes my handsome soldier—but Mademoiselle Giannina is with him; she never permits us to be alone together for a moment. I have some suspicion she is my rival.

Enter GIANNINA and DE LA COTTERIE

Giannina—Keep your seat, Mademoiselle; excuse me for having left you alone for a little while. I know you will be kind enough to forgive me, and I bring some one with me, who, I am sure, will secure your pardon.

Costanza—Though surely in your own house and with a real friend such ceremony is needless, your company is always agreeable. I desire you will put yourself to no inconvenience.

Giannina—Do you hear, Lieutenant? You see we Dutch are not without wit.

De la Cotterie—This is not the first time I have observed it

Costanza—Monsieur De la Cotterie is in a house that does honor to our country, and if he admires ladies of wit, he need not go out of it.

Giannina—You are too polite, Mademoiselle.

Costanza—I simply do justice to merit.

Giannina—Let us not dispute about our merits, but rather leave it to the Lieutenant to decide.

De la Cotterie—If you wish a decision, you must choose a better judge.

Giannina—A partial one, indeed, cannot be a good judge.

Costanza—And to say nothing of partiality, he feels under obligations to you as the mistress of the house.

Giannina—Oh, in France, the preference is always given to the guest: is it not so, Lieutenant?

De la Cotterie—It is no less the custom in Holland than in my own country.

Costanza—That is to say, the greater the merit, the greater the distinction with which they are treated.

Giannina—On that principle you would be treated with the most distinction.

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—I shall get into trouble if this conversation continues.

Costanza—By your leave, Mademoiselle.

Giannina—Why do you leave us so soon?

Costanza—I am engaged to dine with my aunt, and it is not amiss to go early.

Giannina—Oh, it is too early; your aunt is old, and you well perhaps find her still in bed.

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—Do not prevent her from going.

Giannina—He begs me to detain you.

Costanza—I am overpowered by your politeness. [Curtseying.]—[Aside] She delights to torment me.

Giannina [To Costanza.]—What say you, my friend, have I not a good heart?

Costanza—I must praise your kindness to me.

Giannina [To De la Cotterie.]— And do you, too, own you are under obligations to me?

De la Cotterie—Yes, certainly, I have reason to be grateful to you; you, who know my feelings, must be conscious of the great favor you do me. [Ironically.]

Giannina [To Costanza.]—You hear him? he is delighted.

Costanza—My dear friend, as you have such a regard for me, and take so much interest in him, allow me to speak freely to you Your worthy father has told me a piece of news that overwhelms me with joy and surprise. If all he has told me be true, I pray you, Monsieur De la Cotterie, to confirm it.

Giannina—This is just what I anticipated; but as your

conversation cannot be brief, and your aunt expects you, would it not be well to defer it to another opportunity?

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—Heaven grant I may not be still more involved!

Costanza—A few words are all I ask.

Giannina—Come, Lieutenant, take courage, and say all in a few words.

De la Cotterie—Indeed, I have not the courage.

Giannina—No, my dear, it is impossible to express in a few words the infinite things he has to say to you.

Costanza—It will be enough if he says but one word.

Giannina—And what is that?

Costanza—That he really loves me.

Giannina—Pardon me; the Lieutenant is too polite to speak of love to one young lady in the presence of another; but I can, by going away, give you an opportunity of conversing together, and so remove all obstacles to an explanation. [About to go.]

De la Cotterie—Stay, Mademoiselle!

Costanza—Yes, and mortify me no more. Be assured I should never have spoken with the boldness I have done, had you not led me to do so. I do not comprehend your meaning, there is an inconsistency in your conduct; but, be it as it may, time will bring the truth to light. And now permit me to take leave.

Giannina—My dear friend, pardon my inattention to you on first coming. You are free to go or to remain, as you please.

Enter FILIBERTO

Filiberto—What delightful company! But why do you not all sit down?

Giannina—Costanza is just going.

Filiberto [To Costanza.] Why so soon?

Giannina—Her aunt expects her.

Filiberto—No, my dear young lady, do me the favor to remain; we may want you, and in affairs of this kind moments are often precious. I have sent to your father, to say I desire to have a conversation with him; I am certain he will come. We will have a private interview, and, however little he may be inclined to give his consent, I shall press him so as not to leave him time to repent; if we agree, I will call you both immediately into my room.

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—Our situation is becoming more critical every moment.

Filiberto [To De la Cotterie.]—You seem to me to be agitated.

Giannina—It is the excess of joy.

Filiberto [To Costanza.]—And what effect has hope on you?

Costanza—I have more fear than hope.

Filiberto—Rely on me. For the present, be content to remain here; and, as we do not know exactly when your father will come, stay to dinner with us.

Giannina—She cannot stay, sir.

Filiberto—Why not?

Giannina—Because she promised her aunt to dine with her to-day

Costanza [Aside.]—I see she does not wish me to remain.

Filiberto—The aunt who expects you is your father's sister?

Costanza—Yes, sir.

Filiberto—I know her; she is my particular friend. Leave it to me. I will get you released from the engagement, and, as soon as Monsieur Riccardo comes here, I will send word to her where you are, and she will be satisfied.

Costanza—I am grateful, Monsieur Filiberto, for your great kindness; permit me for a moment to see my aunt,

who is not well. I will soon return, and avail myself of your politeness

Filiberto—Very well; come back quickly.

Costanza—Good morning to you; you will soon see me again.

Giannina—Good-by.—[Aside.] If she does not come back I shall not break my heart.

Filiberto—Adieu, my dear.—One moment. Lieutenant, for a man who has been in the wars, you do not seem quite as much at your ease as you should be.

Costanza—Why do you say so, sir?

Filiberto—Because you are letting Mademoiselle go away without taking notice of her—without one word of civility.

Costanza—Indeed, he has said but few.

De la Cotterie [To Filiberto.]—I ought not to abuse the privilege you have given me.

Filiberto [Aside.] I understand.—Giannina, a word with you.

Giannina—Yes, father.

Filiberto [Aside to Giannina.]—It is not right for a young lady to thrust herself between two lovers in this manner; on account of you, they cannot speak two words to each other.

Giannina [To Filiberto]—They spoke in whispers together.

Filiberto [To De la Cotterie.]—Well, if you have anything to say to her—

De la Cotterie—There will be time enough, sir

Filiberto [To Giannina.]—Attend to me.

Costanza [Aside to De la Cotterie.]—At least assure me of your affection.

De la Cotterie [Aside to Costanza.] Excuse me, Mademoiselle. [Giannina coughs aloud.] [Aside.]—I am exceedingly embarrassed.

Costanza [Loud enough for all to hear.]—Is it possible you will not say once that you love me?

Giannina [To Costanza, with asperity.]—How many times do you wish him to tell you so? Did he not say so before me?

Filiberto [To Giannina, with asperity.] No meddling, I tell you.

Costanza—Do not disturb yourself, Mademoiselle; to see clearly here is not easy. I wish you all a good morning. Adieu, Lieutenant.—[Aside.] He is worried by that troublesome girl. [Exit.]

Filiberto [To Giannina.]—I am not pleased with your ways.

Giannina—My dear father, let me amuse myself a little. I, who am so free from love, like sometimes to vex these lovers. As it was I who discovered their passion for each other, they are under obligations to me for their approaching happiness; hence they may pardon my jokes.

Filiberto—You girls are the devil! but the time will come, my daughter, when you will know how trying to lovers are these little teasing ways. You are now old enough, and when the first good offer presents itself, be prepared to accept it. What says Monsieur de la Cotterie! Am I not right?

De la Cotterie—Quite right.

Giannina—Monsieur Quite Right, that is for me to decide, not for you.

Filiberto—Are you averse to being married?

Giannina—If I could find a husband to my taste—

Filiberto—I shall be pleased if he is to your taste—to mine he certainly must be; the fortune I intend for you will make you equal to the best match in Holland.

Giannina—The father of Mademoiselle Constanza says the same.

Filiberto—Do you compare Monsieur Riccardo with me? or do you compare yourself to the daughter of a

broker? You vex me when you talk so. I will hear no more.

Giannina—But I do not say—

Filiberto—I'll hear no more. [Exit.

De la Cotterie—Ah, my Giannina, our affairs are worse than ever. How much better not to have taken such a step!

Giannina—Who could have foreseen my father would involve himself in this way?

De la Cotterie—I see no remedy but my immediate departure.

Giannina—Such weakness I did not expect.

De la Cotterie—Then I may be forced to marry Mademoiselle Costanza.

Giannina—Do so, if you have the heart.

De la Cotterie—Or shall the whole mystery be explained?

Giannina—It would be a most unhandsome act, to expose me to the shame of having contrived such a deception.

De la Cotterie—Then do you suggest some plan

Giannina—All I can say is this: think no more of going away. As to marrying Mademoiselle Costanza, it is absurd; to discover our plot, preposterous. Resolve, then, on some plan to secure at the same time our love, our reputation, and our happiness. [Exit.

De la Cotterie—Excellent advice! but among so many things not to be done, where shall we find what is to be done? Alas! nothing remains but absolute despair.

[Exit.

Scene Second.

Enter FILIBERTO, alone.

Filiberto—I never can believe that Monsieur Riccardo refuses to come here; he knows who I am, and that it is

to his interest not to offend one who can do him either good or harm. He must remember I lent him ten thousand florins when he began business, but there are persons who easily forget benefits, and regard neither friends nor relatives, when they can no longer make use of them

Enter MARIANNA

Marianna—If I do not interrupt you, Monsieur Filiberto, I would say something to you.

Filiberto—I am now at leisure.

Marianna—I would speak to you of an affair of my own.

Filiberto—Well, be quick, for I am expecting company.

Marianna—I will tell you in two words: with your permission, I wish to marry.

Filiberto—Well, marry, then! Much good may it do you!

Marianna—But this is not all, sir. I am a poor girl, and have now lived ten years in your family; with what attention and fidelity I have served you, you know. I ask you, not for the value of the thing, but as a mark of your favor, to make me a small present.

Filiberto—Well, I will do something for you as a recompense for your faithful services. Have you found a husband?

Marianna—Yes, sir.

Filiberto—Bravo! I am glad of it. And you tell me of it after it is all arranged?

Marianna—Pardon me, sir; I should not do so now, but accident has led me to an engagement with a young man of small means, which makes me come to you.

Filiberto—I will lay a wager it is the Lieutenant's servant with whom you are in love.

Marianna—You are right, sir.

Filiberto—And are you willing to travel all over the world with him?

Marianna—I am in hopes he will live here, if his master marries, as they say—

Filiberto—Yes, it is likely he will marry.

Marianna—No one should know better than you, sir.

Filiberto—I am most desirous to see him happy.

Marianna—As that is the case, sir, I consider it as if it were already done.

Filiberto—There may be difficulties in the way, but I hope to overcome them

Marianna—There are none, I think, on the part of the young lady.

Filiberto—No; she is much in love with him.

Marianna—That is evident.

Filiberto—And when do you purpose to be married?

Marianna—If it please you, sir, at the same time my young lady is married.

Filiberto—What young lady?

Marianna—My mistress, your daughter.

Filiberto—If you wait till then, you will have time enough.

Marianna—Do you think her marriage will be long delayed?

Filiberto—Good! Before talking of her marriage, the husband must be found.

Marianna—Why, is there not a husband?

Filiberto—A husband! not that I know of.

Marianna—You do not know?

Filiberto—No! I know nothing of it Tell me what you know, and do not hide the truth.

Marianna—You astonish me! Is she not to marry Monsieur de la Cotterie? Did you not tell me so yourself, and that you were pleased at it?

Filiberto—Blockhead! Did you suppose I would give my daughter to a soldier—the younger son of a poor

family? to one who has not the means of supporting her in the way to which she has been accustomed from her birth?

Marianna—Did you not say just now that Monsieur de la Cotterie was about to be married, and that you were most desirous for his happiness?

Filiberto—To be sure I did.

Marianna—And, pray, whom is he to marry, if not Mademoiselle Giannina?

Filiberto—Stupid! Are there no girls at The Hague but her?

Marianna—He visits at no other house.

Filiberto—And does nobody come here?

Marianna—I do not perceive that he pays attention to anyone but my young mistress.

Filiberto—Blockhead! Don't you know Mademoiselle Costanza?

Marianna—A blockhead cannot know everything.

Filiberto—Has my daughter made you her confidante?

Marianna—She always speaks of the officer with the greatest esteem, and expresses much pity for him.

Filiberto—And did you believe her pity proceeded from love?

Marianna—I did.

Filiberto—Blockhead!

Marianna—I know, too, he wanted to go away, because he was in despair—

Filiberto—Well?

Marianna—Fearing her father would not give his consent.

Filiberto—Excellent!

Marianna—And are you not that father?

Filiberto—Are there no other fathers?

Marianna—You gave me to understand they were to be married.

Filiberto—How absurd is your stupidity!

Marianna—I will venture my head I am right.

Filiberto—You should understand your mistress better, and respect her more than to think so.

Marianna—Indeed, it is an honorable love.

Filiberto—Begone directly!

Marianna—I see no great harm in it.

Filiberto—Here comes some one—Monsieur Riccardo. Go quickly.

Marianna—You are too rough, sir.

Filiberto—Blockhead!

Marianna—We shall see who is the blockhead, I or—

Filiberto—You or I the blockhead?

Marianna—I—or that man passing along the street.

[Exit.

Filiberto—Impertinent! whether she marries or not, she shall stay no longer in my house. To have such an opinion of my daughter! Giannina is not capable of it; no, not capable.

Enter RICCARDO

Riccardo—Your servant, Monsieur Filiberto.

Filiberto—Good day to you, Monsieur Riccardo. Excuse me if I have put you to any inconvenience.

Riccardo—Have you any commands for me?

Filiberto—I wish to have some conversation with you. Pray be seated.

Riccardo—I can spare but a few moments.

Filiberto—Are you much engaged just now?

Riccardo—Yes, indeed; among other things, I am harassed by a number of people about the case of the smugglers who have been arrested.

Filiberto—I have heard of it. Are these poor people still in prison?

Riccardo—Yes; and I wish they may remain there until their house is utterly ruined.

Filiberto—And have you the heart to bear the tears of their children?

Riccardo—Had they not the heart to violate the laws of the customs—to defraud the revenue? I wish I could catch them oftener; do you not know that smugglers on conviction pay all costs?

Filiberto [*Aside*].—Oh! his vile employment.

Riccardo—Well, what have you to say to me?

Filiberto—Monsieur Riccardo, you have a daughter to marry.

Riccardo—Yes, and a plague to me she is.

Filiberto—Does her being in your house put you to any inconvenience?

Riccardo—No; but the thought of providing for her when she marries does.

Filiberto [*Aside*].—How contemptible!—If she wishes to marry, you must provide for her.

Riccardo—I shall do so, I shall be obliged to do so; but on one of two conditions: without a fortune, if she marries to please herself—with one, if to please me.

Filiberto—I have a proposal to make to you.

Riccardo—Let me hear it, but be quick

Filiberto—Do you know a certain French officer who is a guest in my house?

Riccardo—Do you propose him for my daughter?

Filiberto—Say I did, would you have any objection?

Riccardo—An officer, and a Frenchman! He shall not have my daughter either with or without a fortune.

Filiberto—Are you, then, opposed to the French and the military?

Riccardo—Yes, to both equally; much more so if they are united in the same person. I hate the French, because they are not friends to commerce and industry, as we are; they care for nothing but suppers, the theater, and amusement. With soldiers I have no reason to be pleased; I know how much I lose by them. They con-

tend we contractors are obliged to maintain their infantry—their horse; and when they are in quarters, they waste a whole arsenalful of money.

Filiberto—The French officer of whom I speak is an honorable man; he has no vice, and is moreover of a noble family.

Riccardo—Is he rich?

Filiberto—He is a younger son.

Riccardo—If he is not rich, I value but little his nobility, and still less his profession.

Filiberto—My dear friend, let us speak confidentially. A man like you, blessed with a large fortune, never can better employ fifty or sixty thousand florins than by bestowing them on his daughter, when she marries so worthy a man.

Riccardo—On this occasion I would not give ten livres.

Filiberto—And to whom will you give your daughter?

Riccardo—If I am to dispose of so large a sum of money, I wish to place it in one of the best houses in Holland.

Filiberto—You never will do so.

Riccardo—Why not?

Filiberto—Because the respectable houses in Holland have no need to enrich themselves in this manner.

Riccardo—You esteem this French officer highly?

Filiberto—Most highly.

Riccardo—Why not give him your own daughter, then?

Filiberto—Why not? Because—because I do not choose.

Riccardo—And I do not choose to give him mine.

Filiberto—There is some difference between you and me.

Riccardo—I do not perceive in what it consists.

Filiberto—We know very well how you began.

Riccardo—But we do not know how you will end.

Filiberto—Your language is too arrogant.

Riccardo—Were we not in your house, it should be stronger.

Filiberto—I will let you know who I am.

Riccardo—I am not afraid of you.

Filiberto—Go! we will speak of this again.

Riccardo—Yes, again.—[Aside.] If he ever falls into my hands—if I catch him in the least evasion of the revenue laws—I swear I will destroy him. [Exit.

Filiberto—A rascal! a brute without civility! an impertinent fellow!

Enter DE LA COTTERIE

De la Cotterie [Aside]—Their conference, ending in a quarrel, makes me hope he has refused his daughter.

Filiberto [Aside]—I am not I, if I do not let him see—

De la Cotterie—Monsieur—

Filiberto—An ill-tempered, worthless—

De la Cotterie—Are these compliments intended for me, sir?

Filiberto—Pardon me; I am carried away by my anger.

De la Cotterie—Who has offended you?

Filiberto—That insolent fellow, Monsieur Riccardo.

De la Cotterie—And has he refused his consent to the marriage?

Filiberto [Aside.]—I am sorry I must bring this new trouble on the poor Lieutenant.

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—Heaven be praised! fortune at last aids me.

Filiberto—My friend, never give way to resentment—to impatience of temper.

De la Cotterie—Tell me the truth; does he refuse his daughter?

Filiberto—A man in this world ought to be prepared for any event.

De la Cotterie—I am impatient to hear the truth.

Filiberto [*Aside.*—Ah! if I tell him, he will drop down dead.

De la Cotterie [*Aside.*—This suspense is intolerable.

Filiberto [*Aside.*—Yet he must know.

De la Cotterie—By your leave, sir. [*Going.*]

Filiberto—Stay a moment.—[*Aside.*] If he goes, there is danger he will destroy himself from despair.

De la Cotterie—Why not tell me at once what he said to you?

Filiberto—Control yourself. Do not give way to despair, because an avaricious, presumptuous, ignorant father refuses to marry his daughter respectably. There is a way to manage it in spite of him.

De la Cotterie—No, sir; when the father refuses, it is not proper for me to persist.

Filiberto—Well, what do you mean to do?

De la Cotterie—To go far away, and to sacrifice my love to honor, duty, and quiet.

Filiberto—And have you the heart to abandon a girl who loves you?—to leave her a prey to despair?—soon to receive the sad intelligence of her illness, perhaps of her death!

De la Cotterie—Ah, Monsieur Filiberto, your words will kill me! if you knew their force, you would be cautious how you use them.

Filiberto—My words will conduct you to joy, to peace, to happiness.

De la Cotterie—Ah, no! rather to sorrow and destruction.

Filiberto—It is strange that a man of spirit like you should be so easily discouraged.

De la Cotterie—If you knew my case, you would not talk so.

Filiberto—I know it perfectly, but do not consider it desperate. The girl loves you—you love her passion-

ately. This will not be the first marriage between young persons that has taken place without the consent of parents.

De la Cotterie—Do you approve of my marrying the daughter without the consent of the father?

Filiberto—Yes—in your case—considering the circumstances, I do approve of it. If the father is rich, you are of a noble family. You do him honor by the connection; he provides for your interest by a good dowry.

De la Cotterie—But, sir, how can I hope for any dowry when I marry his daughter in this manner? The father, offended, will refuse her the least support.

Filiberto—When it is done, it is done. He has only this one child; his anger may last a few days, and then he must do what so many others have done: he will receive you as his son-in-law, and perhaps make you master of his house.

De la Cotterie—And may I hope for this?

Filiberto—Yes, if you have courage.

De la Cotterie—I do not want courage; the difficulty lies in the means.

Filiberto—There is no difficulty in the means. Hear my suggestions. Mademoiselle Costanza must now be at her aunt's. Do what I tell you. Give up your dinner to-day, as I shall give up mine on your account. Go and find her. If she loves you in earnest, persuade her to show her love by her actions. If the aunt is favorable to your designs, ask her protection, and then, if the girl consents, marry her.

De la Cotterie—And if the injured father should threaten to send me to prison?

Filiberto—Carry her with you into France.

De la Cotterie—With what means? With what money?

Filiberto—Wait a moment. [Goes and opens a bureau.]

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—Oh, heavens! how unconscious is he that he is encouraging me to an enterprise of which the consequences may fall on his own head!

Filiberto—Take this Here are a hundred guineas in gold, and four hundred more in notes: these five hundred guineas will serve you for some time; accept them from my friendship. I think I can make the father of the girl return them to me.

De la Cotterie—Sir, I am full of confusion—

Filiberto—What confuses you? I am astonished at you! you want spirit; you want courage. Go quickly, and do not lose a moment. In the mean time, I will observe the movements of Monsieur Riccardo, and if there is any danger of his surprising you, I will find persons to keep him away. Let me know what happens, either in person or by note. My dear friend, you seem already to have recovered your spirits. I rejoice for your sake May fortune be propitious to you!—[Aside.] I am desirous to see Monsieur Riccardo in a rage—in despair. [Closes the bureau.]

De la Cotterie [Aside.]—He gives me counsel, and money to carry it into effect. What shall I resolve on? What plan shall I follow? Take fortune on the tide; and he can blame no one but himself, who, contriving a stratagem against another, falls into his own snare.

[Exit.

FILIBERTO, alone

Filiberto—In truth, I feel some remorse of conscience for the advice and aid I have given. I remember, too, that I have a daughter, and I would not have such an injury done to me. Nature tells us, and the law commands, not to do to others what we should not wish done to us. But I am carried along by several reasons; a certain gentleness of disposition inclining me to hospitality. to friendship, makes me love the Lieutenant, and take

almost the same interest in him as if he were my son. The marriage appears to me a suitable one, the opposition of Monsieur Riccardo unjust, and his severity to his daughter tyranny. Add to all this the uncivil treatment I have received from him, the desire to be revenged, and the pleasure of seeing his pride humbled. Yes, if I lose the five hundred guineas, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing my friend made happy, and Monsieur Riccardo mortified.

Enter COSTANZA

Costanza—Here I am, sir.

Filiberto [Disturbed.]—What brings you here?

Costanza—Did you not send for me?

Filiberto [As before.]—Have you seen Monsieur de la Cotterie?

Costanza—No, sir, I have not seen him.

Filiberto—Return at once to your aunt's.

Costanza—Do you drive me from your house?

Filiberto—No, I do not drive you away, but I advise you—I entreat. Go quickly, I tell you.

Costanza—I wish to know the reason.

Filiberto—You shall know it when you are at your aunt's.

Costanza—Has anything new occurred?

Filiberto—Yes, there is something new.

Costanza—Tell me what it is.

Filiberto—Monsieur de la Cotterie will tell you.

Costanza—Where is he?

Filiberto—At your aunt's.

Costanza—The Lieutenant has not been there.

Filiberto—He is this moment gone there.

Costanza—What for?

Filiberto—Return; then you will know it.

Costanza—Have you spoken to my father?

Filiberto—Yes; ask your husband that is to be.

Costanza—My husband!

Filiberto—Yes, your husband.

Costanza—May I rely on it?

Filiberto—Go directly to your aunt's.

Costanza—Please tell me what has happened.

Filiberto—Time is precious; if you lose time, you lose your husband.

Costanza—Ah, me! I will run with all speed; would that I had wings to my feet. [Exit.

Enter GIANNINA

Filiberto—Two words from the Lieutenant are worth more than a thousand from me.

Giannina—Is what Monsieur de la Cotterie has told me true, sir?

Filiberto—What has he told you?

Giannina—That you advised him to marry the girl without the consent of her father

Filiberto—Did he tell you this in confidence?

Giannina—Yes, sir.

Filiberto [Aside.]—I am displeased at his indiscretion.

Giannina—And that you gave him five hundred guineas to aid him in the scheme.

Filiberto [Aside.]—Imprudent! I am almost sorry I did so.

Giannina—Your silence confirms it; it is true, then?

Filiberto—Well, what do you say to it?

Giannina—Nothing, sir. It is enough for me to know you did it. Your humble servant, sir.

Filiberto—Where are you going?

Giannina—To amuse myself.

Filiberto—In what manner?

Giannina—With the marriage of Monsieur de la Cotterie.

Filiberto—But it has not taken place yet.

Giannina—I hope it soon will.

Filiberto—Be cautious—mention it to no one.

Giannina—Never fear; it will be known as soon as it is over. You will have the credit of contriving it, and I shall be most happy when it is done. [Exit.]

Filiberto [Alone.]—I hope she will not imitate this bad example; but there is no danger. She is a good girl, and, like me, can distinguish between cases, and understands what is proper; and as I know how she has been brought up, under my own care, I have no apprehensions such a misfortune may befall me.

ACT III

Scene First

FILIBERTO and MARIANNA

Marianna—Excuse me for interrupting you again

Filiberto—I suppose you have some new piece of nonsense?

Marianna—I hope you will not again call me block-head.

Filiberto—Not unless you utter more absurdities.

Marianna—I have only to tell you I am just about to be married, and to bespeak your kindness.

Filiberto—Then you have determined to marry before your mistress?

Marianna—No, sir; she is to be married to-day, and I shall be married to-morrow.

Filiberto—And you do not wish me to call you block-head?

Marianna—You still persist in concealing it from me?

Filiberto—Concealing what?

Marianna—The marriage of my young lady.

Filiberto—Are you out of your senses?

Marianna—Now, to show you I am not so foolish, I will own a fault I have committed, from curiosity. I stood behind the hangings, and heard Monsieur de la Cotterie talking with your daughter, and it is settled that they are to be married privately this evening, and you have given five hundred guineas on account of her portion.

Filiberto—On account of her portion! [Laughing.]

Marianna—Yes, I think on account of her portion; I saw the guineas with my own eyes.

Filiberto—Yes, you are foolish, more foolish, most foolish.

Marianna [Aside.]—He vexes me so I hardly know what to do.

Filiberto—The Lieutenant, however, has acted very improperly; he ought not to have mentioned it to my daughter, especially when there was danger of being overheard.

Marianna—If you hide it from me for fear I shall make it public, you do wrong to my discretion.

Filiberto—Your discretion, indeed! you conceal yourself, listen to what people are talking about, misunderstand them, and then report such nonsense.

Marianna—I was wrong to listen, I admit; but as to misunderstanding, I am sure I heard right.

Filiberto—You will force me to say or do something not very pleasant.

Marianna—Well, well! where did Mademoiselle Gianina go just now?

Filiberto—Where did she go?

Marianna—Did she not go out with Monsieur de la Cotterie?

Filiberto—Where?

Marianna—I heard they went to Madame Gertrude's.

Filiberto—To my sister's?

Marianna—Yes, sir.

Filiberto—Giannina may have gone there, not the Lieutenant.

Marianna—I know they went out together, sir.

Filiberto—The Lieutenant may have accompanied her; my sister's house is near the place where he was to go; my daughter might choose to be at hand to hear the news. I know all; everything goes on well, and I say again you are a blockhead.

Marianna [Aside.]—This is too bad, I can hardly keep my temper.

Filiberto—See who is in the hall—I hear some one.

Marianna [Aside.]—Oh, it will be excellent if a trick has been played on the old gentleman! but it is impossible. [Exit.]

Filiberto [Alone.]—Heaven grant it may end well! The imprudence of the Lieutenant might have ruined the plot, but young persons are subject to these indiscretions. I fortunately had sense enough when I was a young man, and have more now I am old.

Enter GASCOIGNE

Gascoigne—Your servant, Monsieur Filiberto.

Filiberto—Good-day, my friend. What news have you?

Gascoigne—My master sends his best compliments.

Filiberto—Where is the Lieutenant? What is he doing? How go his affairs?

Gascoigne—I believe this note will give you full information.

Filiberto—Let us see. [Opens it.]

Gascoigne [Aside.]—As he does not send me away, I will remain here.

Filiberto [To himself.]—There is a paper enclosed, which seems to be written by my daughter. Let us first know what my friend says.

Gascoigne [Aside.]—Marianna is listening behind the hangings; she is as curious as I.

Filiberto [Reading.]—"Monsieur: Your advice has encouraged me to a step which I should not have had the boldness to venture on, however urged, by the violence of my love." Yes, indeed, he wanted courage. "I have carried Mademoiselle to a respectable and secure house, that is to say, to her aunt's."

He must have met Costanza, and they have gone together. I did well to send her quickly; all my own work!

"The tears of the girl softened the good old lady, and she assented to our marriage." Excellent, excellent! it could not be better done.

"Orders were given for a notary to be called in, and the marriage ceremony was performed in the presence of two witnesses."

Admirable—all has gone on well. "I cannot express to you my confusion, not having the courage to ask anything but your kind wishes; the rest will be added in the writing of your daughter, whom you will more readily pardon. I kiss your hand."

What does he want of me that he has not the courage to ask, and for which he asks my daughter to intercede? Let me read the enclosed note. He must have gone at once to my sister's, to let Giannina know when the marriage was over. Well, what says my daughter?

"Dear father." She writes well—a good mercantile hand; she is a fine girl, God bless her! "Permit me, through this letter, to throw myself at your feet, and to ask your pardon." Oh, heavens! what has she done?

"Informed by yourself of the advice you had given to Monsieur de la Cotterie, and of the money you furnished him with to carry it into execution, I have yielded to my affection, and married the Lieutenant."

Oh, infamous! Deceiver! Traitor! Abandoned girl! They have killed me!

Enter MARIANNA

Marianna—What has happened, sir?

Filiberto—Help me! support me! for heaven's sake, do not leave me!

Marianna—How can such a blockhead help you?

Filiberto—You are right; laugh at me—abuse me—show me no mercy. I deserve it all, and I give you full liberty to do so.

Marianna—No; I feel compassion for you.

Filiberto—I am not worthy of your compassion.

Gascoigne—Do not, sir, abandon yourself to despair; my master is an honorable gentleman, of a noble family.

Filiberto—He has ruined my daughter; he has destroyed my hopes.

Marianna—You are able to provide handsomely for him.

Filiberto—And shall my estate go in this way?

Gascoigne—Pardon me, sir; the same arguments you urged to convince Monsieur Riccardo may serve to convince yourself.

Filiberto—Ah, traitor! do you amuse yourself at my folly?

Marianna—Gascoigne speaks to the purpose, and you have no right to complain of him. [With warmth.]

Filiberto—Yes, insult me, rejoice at my disgrace!

Marianna—I have pity on you, blinded as you are by anger.

Gascoigne—Condemn yourself for the fruits of your own bad advice.

Filiberto—Why deceive me? why make me believe the love of the officer was for Mademoiselle Costanza?

Gascoigne—Because love is full of stratagems, and teaches lovers to conceal their passion, and to contrive schemes for their own happiness.

Filiberto—And if Monsieur Riccardo had agreed to

the marriage of his daughter, what a figure I should have made in the affair!

Gascoigne—My master never asked you to interfere for him.

Filiberto—No, but he let me do it.

Gascoigne—Say, rather, that you did not understand him.

Filiberto—In short, they have betrayed and cheated me; the conduct of my daughter is treacherous, and that of the Lieutenant infamous.

Gascoigne—You should speak more respectfully, sir, of an officer.

Marianna—Remember, soldiers wear swords.

Filiberto—Yes, that is right; all he has to do now is to kill me.

Gascoigne—My master has no such cruel design; you will soon see him come to ask your pardon.

Filiberto—I do not wish to see him at all.

Gascoigne—Your daughter, then, shall come instead of him.

Filiberto—Name her not to me.

Marianna—Your own flesh and blood, sir!

Filiberto—Ungrateful! she was my love—my only joy.

Gascoigne—What is done cannot be undone.

Filiberto—I know it, insolent—I know it too well.

Gascoigne—Do not be offended with me, sir.

Marianna—Have compassion on him, his anger overpowers him. My poor master! he hoped to marry his daughter to a man of his own choice—to have her always near him—to see his grandchildren around him—to delight in their caresses, and to instruct them himself.

Filiberto—All my hopes are gone; no consolation is left for me.

Gascoigne—Do you think, sir, your excellent son-in-law, a worthy Frenchman, and a good soldier, cannot provide grandchildren for you?

Filiberto—My hatred for the father will make me hate the children.

Marianna—Oh, the sense of consanguinity will cause you to forget every injury.

Gascoigne—You have one only daughter in the world; can you have the heart to abandon her—never to see her more?

Filiberto—my anguish of mind will kill me. [Covers his face with his hands.]

Marianna—Gascoigne!

Gascoigne—What do you say?

Marianna—Do you understand me? [Makes a sign for him to go out.]

Gascoigne—I understand.

Marianna—Now is the time.

Gascoigne—So it may prove.

Filiberto—What do you say?

Marianna—I am telling Gascoigne to go away, to disturb you no longer, and not to abuse your patience.

Filiberto—Yes, let him leave me.

Gascoigne—Your servant, sir. Excuse me, if, after having committed such an offence in your house, you see me no more. My master, as things appear at present, will be forced to leave this, and to carry his wife to France. Have you no message to your poor daughter?

Filiberto—Do you think he will go away so soon?

Gascoigne—He told me, if he received no kind answer from you, to order horses immediately.

Marianna—It is a great grief to a father never to see his daughter again.

Filiberto—Is your master a barbarian? Is he so ungrateful? Could I have done more for him? And he has used me with the greatest inhumanity; to steal the heart of my daughter, and the whole time to conceal it from me.

Gascoigne—He would willingly have brought her to you before now, but for the fear of your resentment.

Filiberto—Perfidious! I have to applaud him for his handsome action—I have to be grateful for his treachery; he shuns the reproaches of an offended father—he cannot bear to hear himself called traitor.

Gascoigne—I understand; by your leave. [Going.]

Filiberto—Tell him he must never dare to come in my presence; I do not wish to see him—I do not desire it.

Gascoigne [Aside.]—I understand perfectly; nature never fails. [Exit.]

Marianna [Aside.]—Matters will soon be accommodated.

Filiberto [To himself.]—My own injury! this is good! —to my own injury!

Marianna—To turn your thoughts from this subject, sir, may I now speak to you concerning my own affairs?

Filiberto—I need nothing else to torment me but for you to talk of your marriage. I hate the very word, and never wish to hear it again while I live.

Marianna—It seems, then, you want the world to come to an end.

Filiberto—For me it is ended.

Marianna—My poor master! and where will your estate go—your riches?

Filiberto—May the devil take them!

Marianna—You would die rich, and let your daughter live in want?

Filiberto—Poor, unhappy girl!

Marianna—And would you carry this hatred in your bosom, and feel remorse at your death?

Filiberto—Be silent, devil! torture me no more.

Enter COSTANZA

Costanza—Monsieur Filiberto, you have made sport of me.

Filiberto [*Aside.*].—This was wanting to complete all.

Costanza—I have been waiting two hours, and no one has appeared.

Filiberto [*Aside.*].—I know not what answer to make.

Costanza—Did you not urge me to return to my aunt's, telling me the Lieutenant would be there?

Marianna—My young lady, you shall hear how it was. The Lieutenant had to go to the aunt's—and to the aunt's he went. There he was to have an understanding with Mademoiselle—and he had an understanding with Mademoiselle. But the poor gentleman mistook the house: instead of going to Aunt Hortensia's he found himself at Aunt Gertrude's, and instead of marrying Mademoiselle Costanza, he has married Mademoiselle Giannina.

Costanza—Can it be possible they have laughed at and deceived me in this manner? Speak, Monsieur Filiberto; tell me truly what has been done, and do not suppose me patient enough to submit to such an injury.

Filiberto—Oh, if I submit to it, you must submit too.

Costanza—And what have you to submit to?

Filiberto—On your account I have been accessory to the ruin of my daughter.

Costanza—On my account?

Filiberto—Yes, the machine I contrived for you has fallen on my own head.

Marianna—Fortunately, my master's skull is reasonably thick.

Costanza—I understand nothing of all this.

Filiberto—I will tell you plainly and distinctly the whole affair. Know then—

Enter RICCARDO

Riccardo [*To Costanza.*].—What are you doing here?

Filiberto [*To himself.*].—Another torment!

Costanza—Sir, you have never forbidden my coming here.

Riccardo—Well, now I forbid it. I know what you have come for; I know your love for the foreigner, and your schemes against my authority and your own honor.

Filiberto [To Riccardo, with asperity.]—You know nothing. If you knew as much as I know, you would not speak so.

Riccardo—I speak so in consequence of what you told me this morning, and no light matter it is; enough to make me forbid my daughter's coming to your house.

Marianna—Are you afraid they will marry her against your wishes?

Riccardo—I may well fear it.

Marianna—Listen to me: if she does not marry my master, there is nobody else here for her to marry.

Riccardo—Where is the Frenchman—the officer?

Marianna—Shall I tell him, sir?

Filiberto—Ah! he will hear it soon enough.

Marianna—Know, then, the officer has presumed to marry my young mistress.

Riccardo—Ah! [With surprise.]

Filiberto.—Oh! [With vexation.]

Costanza—This is the wrong I apprehended. Ah, my father, resent the insult they have offered to me! They have made use of me to accomplish their designs; they have flattered me to expose me to ridicule; and the injury I have received is an insult to our family.

Riccardo—Yes, I will resent the insult they have offered to me. You I shall send to a convent; and Monsieur Filiberto makes amends for his offence by his own shame.

Filiberto [Aside.]—Quite right—I deserve still more.

Costanza [Aside.]—Wretched me! to what am I brought by my passion, my wretchedness and my disobedience!

Filiberto—My dear friend, excuse my impatient manner. I acknowledge the injustice I have done you, and Heaven punishes me rightly for my improper intentions. Ah, Monsieur Riccardo, I have lost my daughter!—I contrived my own disgrace!

Riccardo—Lost! she is only married—not entirely lost.

Filiberto—I fear I shall never see her again. Who knows but that monster has already carried her away? I gave him five hundred guineas to carry away my heart—my daughter—my only daughter—my love—my only love! Ah, could I embrace her once more! I wish to know if she is gone; I want to see her again. If she is gone, I will kill myself with my own hand. [Going, meets his daughter.]

Enter GIANNINA, and a moment later, DE LA COTTERIE

Giannina—Ah, dearest father!

Filiberto—Ah, most ungrateful daughter!

Giannina—For mercy's sake, pardon me! [Throws herself on her knees.]

Filiberto—Do you deserve pardon?

Giannina—Your anger is most just.

Filiberto [Aside.]—I shall not survive it; I must die.

Riccardo—Both are to be pitied.

Costanza [Aside.]—I shall be revenged if her father refuses to forgive her.

Filiberto—Rise.

Giannina—I will not rise without your pardon.

Filiberto—How could you have the heart to cause me so great an affliction?

Giannina—Ah, sir, your advice—

Filiberto—Not a word of it! torture me no more; never mention again my own folly and weakness. Rise; on that condition I pardon you.

Giannina—Oh, dearest father! [Rises.]

Costanza [*Aside.*—She obtains forgiveness on easy terms.

Giannina—Ah, sir, let your grace extend—

Filiberto—Do not speak to me of your husband!

Giannina—Oh, give him a place in your heart, or I shall be forced to leave you.

Filiberto—*Perfidious!* to talk so to your father!

Giannina—Conjugal duty will oblige me to take this step.

Filiberto—Oh, hard fate of a father! but it is just—I deserve more.

Riccardo—My friend, the act is done, there is no remedy. I advise you to be reconciled to him before your curious mishap is known throughout the whole city.

Filiberto [*To Costanza.*—I entreat you, Mademoiselle—I entreat you not to make it known, for the sake of my honor and reputation. [*To Marianna.*] I tell you not to speak of it. My daughter, mention it to no one.

Giannina—No, for the love of Heaven, let nobody hear of it. Quick! let everything be settled before any one leaves this room. Quick, my dear husband, come here; throw yourself at my father's feet, ask his pardon, kiss his hand; and do you pardon him, receive him for a son-in-law and for a son. Quick! hush! that no one may hear of it. [*She rapidly forces them to do everything as she says it.*]

Filiberto [*Aside.*—I am confounded; I know not what to say.

Costanza—He has not the firmness to resist the sight of his ungrateful daughter. [Exit.

De la Cotterie—Have I your pardon, sir?

Filiberto—Do you think you deserve it?

Giannina—For heaven's sake, say no more! We must take care that nobody shall know what has happened. My father is anxious to save the honor of his family;

and, above all things, I charge you never to urge in your justification that he advised the scheme, and gave you five hundred guineas to carry it into execution.

Filiberto [To Giannina, with asperity.]—I commanded you not to mention it.

Giannina—I was only informing my husband of your commands.

Riccardo—Well, Monsieur Filiberto, are you reconciled?

Filiberto—What can I do? I am constrained by necessity, my affection, by my own kind disposition, to be reconciled to them. You are husband and wife, you are in my house, remain here, and may Heaven bless you!

Giannina—Oh, perfect happiness!

De la Cotterie—I hope, sir, you will never repent of your pardon and kindness to me.

Marianna—Hush! quick! that nobody may know it.

Filiberto—What now?

Marianna—Hush! quick! There is a little affair of mine to be finished. Gascoigne is to be my husband, with the permission of our masters.

Gascoigne [To his master.]—By your leave, sir.
[Gives her his hand.]

Marianna—Hush! quick! that nobody may know it.

Giannina—Against your marriage nothing can be said; mine may be condemned. I confess that I have exceeded the limits of duty, that I have been wanting in respect to my father, and have exposed to hazard my own honor and the reputation of my family. Those who now see me happy, and not punished, must be cautious not to follow a bad example; let them rather say it has pleased Heaven to mortify the father, and not that the daughter is exempt from remorse and regret. Most kind spectators, let the moral of this representation be a warning to families, and may whatever enjoyment you derive from it be consistent with the principles of duty and of virtue.

THE BENEFICENT BEAR

THE BENEFICENT BEAR

[*Il Burbero Benefico*]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

GERONTE.

DALANCOURT, his nephew.

DORVAL, the friend of Geronte.

VALERIO, the lover of Angelica.

PICCARDO, the servant of Geronte.

A SERVANT of Dalancourt.

MADAME DALANCOURT.

ANGELICA, sister of Dalancourt.

MARTUCCIA, housekeeper to Geronte.

The scene is in Paris, at the house of Geronte.

ACT I

Scene First

MARTUCCIA, ANGELICA, and VALERIO.

Angelica—Valerio, leave me, I entreat you; I fear for myself, I fear for you. Ah! if we should be surprised—

Valerio—My dear Angelica!

Martuccia—Do go, sir.

Valerio [To Martuccia.]—One moment more. If I could be well assured—

Martuccia—Of what?

Valerio—Of her love—of her constancy.

Angelica—Ah, Valerio! can you doubt it?

Martuccia—Go, go, sir; she loves you but too well.

Valerio—This is the happiness of my life—

Martuccia—Quick, go away. If my master should come in suddenly!

Angelica [To Martuccia.]—He never leaves his room so early.

Martuccia—That is true; but you know he walks and amuses himself in this room. Here are his chessmen, and here he often plays. Oh, don't you know Signor Geronte?

Valerio—Pardon me, he is Angelica's uncle. I know my father was his friend, but I never have spoken to him.

Martuccia—He has, sir, a most singular character. At heart he is a most worthy man, but impatient and peculiar to the last degree.

Angelica—Yes, he tells me he loves me, and I believe him; but while he tells me so, he makes me tremble.

Valerio [To Angelica.]—What have you to fear? you

have neither father nor mother. You are at your brother's disposal, and he is my friend; I will speak to him.

Martuccia—Ah! Exactly! Trust to Signor Dalancourt.

Valerio—Well, can he refuse me?

Martuccia—Indeed, I think he can.

Valerio—Why so?

Martuccia—Listen; I will explain the whole matter in a few words. My nephew, your brother the lawyer's new clerk, has told me what I will now tell you. He has been with him only a fortnight, I heard it from him this morning; but he confided it to me as the greatest secret: for Heaven's sake do not betray me!

Valerio—Do not fear.

Angelica—You know me.

Martuccia [Speaks in a low tone to Valerio, looking toward the door.] Signor Dalancourt is a ruined man, overwhelmed. He has run through all his fortune, and perhaps his sister's dowry too. Angelica is a burden too great for him to bear, and to free himself from it, he means to shut her up in a convent.

Angelica—Oh, heavens! What do you tell me?

Valerio—Can it be possible? I have known him a long time. Dalancourt always appeared to me a young man of good sense and honorable principles; sometimes impetuous, and apt to take offence, but—

Martuccia—Impetuous—oh, most impetuous!—a match for his uncle, but far from having his uncle's excellent feelings.

Valerio—He is esteemed, beloved by every one. His father was perfectly satisfied with him.

Martuccia—Ah, sir, since his marriage he is no longer the same man.

Valerio—Can it be that Madame Dalancourt—

Martuccia—Yes, she, they say, is the cause of this great change. Signor Geronte is deeply offended with

his nephew for his foolish compliance with the whims of his wife, and—I know nothing, but I would lay a wager that this plan of the convent is of her contrivance.

Angelica [To Martuccia.]—You surprise me. My sister-in-law, whom I looked on as so discreet, who showed me so much friendship! I never could have thought it.

Valerio—I know her, and cannot believe it.

Martuccia—Surely you are not serious? Does any lady dress more elegantly? Is there any new fashion that she does not immediately adopt? At balls and plays, is she not always first?

Valerio—But her husband is ever at her side.

Angelica—Yes, my brother never leaves her.

Martuccia—Well, they are both fools, and both will be ruined together.

Valerio—It is impossible.

Martuccia—Very well, very well. I have told you what you wished to know. Now go at once, and do not expose my mistress to the danger of losing her uncle's favor. He alone can be of any service to her.

Valerio—Keep calm, Angelica. No question of interest shall ever form an obstacle.

Martuccia—I hear a noise. Go at once. [Exit Valerio.]

Angelica—How miserable I am!

Martuccia—There's your uncle coming. Did I not tell you so?

Angelica—I am going.

Martuccia—No, remain here, and open your heart to him.

Angelica—I would as soon put my hand in the fire.

Martuccia—Come, come; he is sometimes a little hasty, but he has not a bad heart.

Angelica—You direct his household, you have influence with him; speak to him for me.

Martuccia—No, you must speak to him yourself; all I can do is to hunt at the matter, and dispose him to listen to you.

Angelica—Yes, yes, say something to him, and I will speak to him afterward. [Going.]

Martuccia—Remain here.

Angelica—No, no; when it is time, call me. I shall not be far away. [Exit.]

MARTUCCIA, alone.

Martuccia—How gentle she is—how amiable! I have been with her from her babyhood. I love her; I am distressed for her, and wish to see her happy. Here he is.

Enter GERONTE.

Geronte [To Martuccia.]—Where's Piccardo?

Martuccia—Signor—

Geronte—Call Piccardo!

Martuccia—Yes, sir. But may I say one word to you?

Geronte [Very impatiently.]—Piccardo, Piccardo!

Martuccia [In the same tone.]—Piccardo, Piccardo!

Enter PICCARDO.

Piccardo—Here, sir; here, sir.

Martuccia [To Piccardo angrily.]—Your master—

Piccardo [To Geronte.]—Here I am, sir.

Geronte—Go to my friend Dorval, and tell him I am waiting to play a game of chess with him.

Piccardo—Yes, sir, but—

Geronte—But what?

Piccardo—I have a commission—

Geronte—To do what?

Piccardo—From your nephew.

Geronte [In a passion.]—Go to Dorval's. .

Piccardo—He wishes to speak to you.

Geronte—Begone, sir!

Piccardo—What a man!

[Exit.

Geronte—A madman—a miserable creature! No, I will not see him; I will not permit him to come and disturb my tranquillity. [Goes to the table.]

Martuccia [Aside.]—There, he is in a rage at once. Most unfortunate for me.

Geronte [Sits.]—What a move that was I made yesterday! what a fatality! How in the world could I be checkmated with a game so well arranged? Let me see; this game kept me awake the whole night. [Looks over the game.]

Martuccia—May I speak to you, sir?

Geronte—No.

Martuccia—But I have something important to say to you.

Geronte—Well, what have you to say? let me hear it.

Martuccia—Your niece wishes to speak to you.

Geronte—I have no time now.

Martuccia—Really! Is what you are about, then, of such very great importance?

Geronte—Yes, of the utmost importance; I don't often amuse myself, and then I do not choose to be plagued to death. Do you hear?

Martuccia—This poor girl—

Geronte—What has happened to her?

Martuccia—They intend to shut her up in a convent.

Geronte—In a convent!—To shut my niece in a convent! to dispose of my niece without my approbation, without my knowing anything about it!

Martuccia—You know your nephew's embarrassments.

Geronte—I have nothing to do with my nephew's embarrassments, nor his wife's follies. He has his own property; if he squanders it, if he ruins himself, so much the worse for him. But as for my niece, I am the head

of the family, I am the master; it is for me to provide for her.

Martuccia—So much the better for her, sir, so much the better. I am glad to see you get so warm in the dear girl's behalf.

Geronte—Where is she?

Martuccia—She is near, sir.—Wait a moment—

Geronte—Let her come in.

Martuccia—Yes, she most earnestly desires to do so, but—

Geronte—But what?

Martuccia—She is timid.

Geronte—Well, what then?

Martuccia—If you speak to her—

Geronte—I must speak to her.

Martuccia—Yes, but in this tone—

Geronte—My tone hurts nobody; let her come and rely on my heart, not on my voice.

Martuccia—That is true, sir. I know you; you are good, humane, charitable; but I entreat you, do not frighten the poor girl; speak to her with a little gentleness.

Geronte—Yes, I will speak to her with gentleness.

Martuccia—You promise me?

Geronte—I promise you.

Martuccia—Do not forget it.

Geronte [Beginning to be impatient.]—No.

Martuccia—Above all, do not get impatient.

Geronte [Impatiently.]—I tell you, no.

Martuccia—I tremble for Angelica.

[Exit.

GERONTE, alone.

Geronte—She is right; I sometimes suffer myself to be carried away by my irritable temper. My niece deserves to be treated with tenderness.

Enter ANGELICA.

Geronte—Come near.

Angelica—Sir? [Timidly advances one step.]

Geronte [Warmly.]—How can you expect me to hear you when you are three miles off?

Angelica—Excuse me, sir. [She approaches him, trembling.]

Geronte—What have you to say to me?

Angelica—Has not Martuccia told you something?

Geronte [At first gently, then by degrees growing excited.]—Yes, she has spoken to me of you, of that insensate brother of yours, that extravagant fellow, who suffers himself to be led by the nose by his silly wife, who is ruined, utterly lost, and has no longer any respect for me. [Angelica moves as if to go away.] Where are you going? [Very impetuously.]

Angelica—You are angry, sir.

Geronte—Well, what is that to you? If I get angry at a blockhead, I am not angry with you. Come near; speak; you must not be afraid of my anger.

Angelica—My dear uncle, I can't speak to you unless I see you calm.

Geronte—What martyrdom! Well, I am calm. Speak. [Tries to compose himself.]

Angelica—Martuccia, sir, has told you—

Geronte—I don't mind what Martuccia says. I want to hear it from yourself.

Angelica—My brother—

Geronte—Your brother—

Angelica—Wishes to shut me up in a convent.

Geronte—Well, do you wish to go into a convent?

Angelica—But, sir—

Geronte [With warmth.]—Well! Speak.

Angelica—It is not for me to decide.

Geronte [With a little more warmth.]—I do not say

it is for you to decide, but I wish to know your inclination.

Angelica—You make me tremble, sir.

Geronte [*Aside, restraining himself.*—I shall burst with rage.—Come near. I understand, then, a convent is not to your liking?

Angelica—No, sir.

Geronte—For what have you an inclination?

Angelica—Sir—

Geronte—Do not be afraid—I am calm. Speak freely.

Angelica—Ah! I have not the courage.

Geronte—Come here. Do you wish to be married?

Angelica—Sir—

Geronte—Yes or no?

Angelica—If you desire—

Geronte—Yes or no?

Angelica—Well, yes—

Geronte—Yes! you wish to be married! to lose your liberty, your tranquillity! Very well; so much the worse for you. Yes, I will marry you.

Angelica [*Aside.*—How good he is, for all his hasty temper!

Geronte—Have you an inclination for anyone in particular?

Angelica [*Aside.*—Now, if I had the courage to speak to him of Valerio!

Geronte—Well, have you any lover?

Angelica [*Aside.*—This is not the opportune moment. I will get Martuccia to speak to him.

Geronte—Come, come, let us end the matter. The house in which you live, the persons you see, may perhaps have led you to form an attachment. I wish to know the truth. Yes, I will do something handsome for you, but only on condition that you deserve it. Do you understand? [*With great warmth.*]

Angelica [*Trembling.*—Yes, sir.

Geronte—Speak openly, frankly. Have you any attachment? [In the same tone.]

Angelica [Hesitating and trembling.]—But no—, sir.—No, sir, I have none.

Geronte—So much the better. I will find a husband for you.

Angelica—I should not like, sir—

Geronte—What is it?

Angelica—You know my timidity.

Geronte—Yes, yes, your timidity. I know woman-kind; now you are a dove, but once married you will be a hawk.

Angelica—Ah, my uncle! since you are so good—

Geronte—Yes, too good.

Angelica—Let me tell you—

Geronte—Dorval not come yet! [Goes to the table.]

Angelica—Hear me, my dear uncle.

Geronte—Don't disturb me now. [Intent on the chessboard.]

Angelica—One single word—

Geronte [Impatiently.]—Enough has been said.

Angelica [Aside.]—Oh, heaven! I am more unhappy than ever. Ah, my dear Martuccia will not abandon me! [Exit.

GERONTE, alone.

Geronte—She is a good girl; I would willingly do all I can for her. If she had any attachment, I would endeavor to please her, but she has none. I will see, I will look about. But what in the world detains Dorval? Is he never coming? I long to try that cursed combination again that made me lose the last game. Certainly, I should have won it—he did not beat me, I beat myself. I must have lost my senses. Let us see a little. My pieces were placed so, and Dorval's so. I moved the king to his castle's square; Dorval placed his bishop on

his king's second square. I—check—yes, I took the pawn—Dorval—he takes my bishop—Dorval—yes, he takes my bishop, and I—give check with my knight. By Jove! Dorval loses his queen. He plays his king, and I take his queen. Yes, the fellow, with his king, has taken my knight. But so much the worse for him. Now he is in my nets; his king is fast. Here is my queen; yes, here she is. Checkmate! It is clear. Checkmate, and the game is won. Ah! if Dorval would come, he should see it.—[Calls.] Piccardo!

Enter DALANCOURT.

Dalancourt [Aside, and in much confusion.].—My uncle is alone; if he will listen to me!

Geronte—I will place the pieces as they were at first. [Not seeing Dalancourt, he calls loudly.] Piccardo!

Dalancourt—Sir—

Geronte [Without turning, and supposing he is speaking to Piccardo.].—Well, have you found Dorval?

Enter DORVAL.

Dorval—Here I am, my friend.

Dalancourt [With resolution.].—My uncle!

Geronte [Turns, sees Dalancourt, rises quickly, throws down the chair, and goes out without speaking.]

Scene Second

DALANCOURT and DORVAL.

Dorval [Laughs.].—What is the meaning of this scene?

Dalancourt—It is dreadful! All this because he has seen me.

Dorval [In the same manner.].—Geronte is my friend. I know his disposition perfectly.

Dalancourt—I am sorry on your account.

Dorval—Indeed, I came at an unlucky time.

Dalancourt—Excuse his violence.

Dorval [Smiles.]—Oh, I'll scold him; I'll scold him.

Dalancourt—Ah, my friend, you are the only person who can do anything for me with him.

Dorval—I will do what I can, with all my heart, but—

Dalancourt—I agree that, from appearances, my uncle has reason to be offended with me; but if he could read my heart, all his affection for me would return, and he would never repent it.

Dorval—Yes, I know your character, and I believe everything might be hoped from you; but your wife—

Dalancourt—My wife, sir! Ah, you do not know her. All the world is mistaken about her, and my uncle especially. I must do her justice, and let the truth be known. She knows nothing of the embarrassments by which I am overwhelmed. She thought me richer than I was, and I have always concealed my affairs from her. I love her. We were married very young. I never have permitted her to ask for anything—to want anything. I have always endeavored to anticipate her wishes, and to provide for her pleasures. In this way I have ruined myself. [Earnestly.]

Dorval—To please a lady—to anticipate her desires! That is no easy task.

Dalancourt—I am certain, had she known my situation, she would have been the first to forbid the expenses I have indulged in to please her.

Dorval—Yet she did not forbid them.

Dalancourt—No, because she had no fear—

Dorval—My poor friend!

Dalancourt [Afflicted.]—Indeed I am poor.

Dorval [Still smiling.]—I pity you.

Dalancourt [With warmth.]—You are making a jest of me.

Dorval [Still laughing.]—By no means; but—you love your wife prodigiously?

Dalancourt—Yes, I love her; I have always loved her, and shall love her as long as I live; I know her, know all her worth, and will not suffer any one to accuse her of faults which she has not.

Dorval [Seriously.]—Gently, my friend, gently; you have a little too much of the family hastiness.

Dalancourt [With much warmth.]—Pardon me, I would not for the world offend you; but when my wife is spoken of—

Dorval—Well, well, let us speak of her no more.

Dalancourt—But I wish you to be convinced.

Dorval [Coldly.]—Yes, I am convinced.

Dalancourt [With much earnestness.]—No, you are not.

Dorval [A little excited.]—Excuse me, I tell you I am.

Dalancourt—Very well, I believe you, and am delighted that you are. Now, my dear friend, speak to my uncle in my behalf.

Dorval—Most gladly will I do so.

Dalancourt—How much obliged to you I shall be!

Dorval—But we must be able to give him some reasons. How have you managed to ruin yourself in so short a time? It is only four years since your father died, leaving you a handsome fortune, and it is said you have spent it all.

Dalancourt—If you knew all the misfortunes that have happened to me! Seeing my affairs were in disorder, I wished to remedy them, and the remedy was worse than the disease: I listened to new schemes, engaged in new speculations, pledged my property, and have lost everything.

Dorval—Here lies the error—new projects; the ruin of many another man.

Dalancourt—And my condition is utterly hopeless.

Dorval—You have been very wrong, my friend, especially as you have a sister.

Dalancourt—Yes; and it is now time to think of providing for her.

Dorval—Every day she grows more beautiful. Madame Dalancourt receives much company in her house, and youth, my dear friend, sometimes—you understand me?

Dalancourt—Regarding this point, I have on reflection found an expedient; I think of placing her in a convent.

Dorval—Place her in a convent! A good plan; but have you consulted your uncle?

Dalancourt—No; he will not hear me; but you must speak to him for me and for Angelica. My uncle esteems and loves you, listens to you, confides in you, and will refuse you nothing.

Dorval—I have great doubts of this.

Dalancourt—I am sure of it. Pray try to see him, and speak to him at once.

Dorval—I will do so; but where is he gone?

Dalancourt—I will find out.—Let us see—Is any one there? [Calls.

Enter PICCARDO.

Piccardo [To Dalancourt.]—Here, sir.

Dalancourt—Has my uncle gone out?

Piccardo—No, sir; he went into the garden.

Dalancourt—Into the garden! at this time of day?

Piccardo—For him it is all the same. When he is a little out of temper, he goes out to take the air and walks about.

Dorval—I will go and join him.

Dalancourt—I know my uncle, sir; you must give him time to get calm. It is better to wait for him here.

Dorval—But if he goes out, he may not return here again.

Piccardo [To Dorval.]—Pardon me, sir, it will not be long before he is here: I know his temper, a few minutes will be sufficient. I can assure you he will be much pleased to see you.

Dalancourt—Well, my dear friend, go into his room. Do me the favor to wait for him there.

Dorval—Willingly; I understand perfectly how cruel your situation is. Some remedy must be provided; yes, I will speak to him, but on condition—

Dalancourt [With warmth.]—I give you my word of honor.

Dorval—It is sufficient.

[Exit into Geronte's room.]

Dalancourt—You did not tell my uncle what I told you to tell him?

Piccardo—Pardon me, sir, I have told him, but he drove me away, according to his custom.

Dalancourt—I am sorry for it; let me know when the moment is favorable for me to speak to him. Some day I will reward you for your services.

Piccardo—I am much obliged to you, sir; but, thank heaven, I am in want of nothing.

Dalancourt—You are rich, then?

Piccardo—I am not rich, but I have a master who will not let me want for anything. I have a wife and four children, and might be in the greatest straits of any man in the world; but my master is so good that I support them without difficulty, and distress is unknown in my house.

[Exit.]

DALANCOURT, alone.

Dalancourt—Ah, my uncle is an excellent man. If Dorval can have any influence over him—If I can hope to receive assistance equal to my wants—If I can keep it concealed from my wife—Ah, why have I deceived her? Why have I deceived myself? My uncle does not

return. Every minute is precious for me. In the mean time, I will go to my lawyer's. Oh, with what pain I go to him! It is true, he flatters me that, notwithstanding the decree, he will find means to gain time; but quibbles are so odious, my feelings suffer, and my honor is affected. Wretched are they who are forced to resort to expedients so discreditable.

Enter MADAME DALANCOURT.

Madame Dalancourt—Ah, my husband! are you here? I have been looking everywhere for you.

Dalancourt—I was going out.

Madame Dalancourt—I met that savage just now; he is scolding and scolding wherever he goes.

Dalancourt—Do you mean my uncle.

Madame Dalancourt—Yes. Seeing a ray of sunshine, I went to walk in the garden, and there I met him. He was stamping his feet, talking to himself, but in a loud voice. Tell me, has he any married servants in his house?

Dalancourt—Yes.

Madame Dalancourt—It must have been this. He said a great many bad things of the husband and wife; very bad, I assure you.

Dalancourt [*Aside.*—I can easily imagine of whom he spoke.

Madame Dalancourt—He is really insupportable.

Dalancourt—You must treat him with respect.

Madame Dalancourt—Can he complain of me? I have failed in nothing; I respect his age, and his quality as your uncle. If I laugh at him sometimes when we are alone, you pardon it. Except this, I have for him all possible respect. But tell me sincerely, has he any for you or for me? He treats us with the greatest asperity; he hates us as much as he can, and now his contempt

for me has become excessive; yet I must caress him and pay court to him.

Dalancourt [Embarrassed.]—But—when it is so easy to do so—he is our uncle. Besides, we may have need of him.

Madame Dalancourt—Need of him! we! how? Have we not means of our own to live in decency? You are not extravagant; I am reasonable. For myself, I desire no more than for you to provide for me as you have done. Let us continue to live with the same moderation, and we shall be independent of every one.

Dalancourt [In a passionate manner.]—Let us continue to live with the same moderation!

Madame Dalancourt—Yes, indeed; I have no vanity. I ask nothing more of you.

Dalancourt [Aside.]—How unhappy I am!

Madame Dalancourt—But you seem to me to be disturbed—thoughtful. What is the matter? you are not easy.

Dalancourt—You are mistaken. Nothing is the matter.

Madame Dalancourt—Pardon me, I know you. If you have any anxiety, why hide it from me?

Dalancourt [More embarrassed.]—I am thinking of my sister. I will tell you the whole.

Madame Dalancourt—Your sister! But why of her? She's the best girl in the world—I love her dearly. Hear me. If you will trust her to me, I will relieve you of this burden, and at the same time make her happy.

Dalancourt—How?

Madame Dalancourt—You think of placing her in a convent, and I know, on good authority, it will be against her wishes.

Dalancourt [A little warmly.]—At her age, ought she to be asked what she wishes or does not wish?

Madame Dalancourt—No; she has understanding

enough to submit to the will of her friends; but why not marry her?

Dalancourt—She is too young.

Madame Dalancourt—Good! was I older than she when we were married?

Dalancourt [Excitedly.]—Well, must I go about from door to door looking for a man to wed her?

Madame Dalancourt—Listen to me, my husband, and do not disturb yourself, I pray. If I guess aright, I am sure Valerio loves her, and that she too is attached to him.

Dalancourt [Aside.]—Heavens, how much I have to suffer!

Madame Dalancourt—You know him. Can there be a better match for Angelica?

Dalancourt [Much embarrassed.]—We will see—we will talk of it.

Madame Dalancourt—Do me the favor to leave the management of this affair to me; I have a great desire to succeed in it.

Dalancourt [In the greatest embarrassment.]—Madame?

Madame Dalancourt—What say you?

Dalancourt—It cannot be.

Madame Dalancourt—No! why not?

Dalancourt—Will my uncle consent to it?

Madame Dalancourt—And if he does not? I do not wish that we should be wanting in our duty to him, but you are Angelica's brother. Her fortune is in your hands—whether it is more or less depends on you alone. Let me assure myself of their inclination, and on the subject of interest, I would soon arrange that.

Dalancourt [Anxiously.]—No; if you love me, do not meddle with it.

Madame Dalancourt—Are you then averse to marrying your sister?

Dalancourt—On the contrary.

Madame Dalancourt—What then?

Dalancourt—I must go now. I will talk with you about it on my return. [Going.]

Madame Dalancourt—Are you displeased at my interference?

Dalancourt—Not at all.

Madame Dalancourt—Hear me. Perhaps it is concerning her fortune?

Dalancourt—I know nothing about it. [Exit.

Madame Dalancourt—What does this conduct mean? I do not comprehend it. It is impossible that my husband—No, he is too wise to have anything to reproach himself with.

Scene Third.

Enter ANGELICA.

Angelica—If I could speak with Martuccia! [Not seeing Madame Dalancourt.]

Madame Dalancourt—Sister!

Angelica [Uneasily.]—Madame!

Madame Dalancourt—Where are you going, sister?

Angelica [Uneasily.]—I am going away, Madame.

Madame Dalancourt—Ah! then you are offended?

Angelica—I have reason to be so.

Madame Dalancourt—Are you angry with me?

Angelica—Why, Madame?

Madame Dalancourt—Hear me, my child; if you are disturbed about the affair of the convent, do not think I have any hand in it. It is just the reverse; I love you, and will do all I can to render you happy.

Angelica [Aside, weeping.]—What duplicity!

Madame Dalancourt—What's the matter? you are weeping.

Angelica [*Aside.*].—How much she has deceived me!
[*Wipes her eyes.*]

Madame Dalancourt—What cause have you for sorrow?

Angelica—Oh, the embarrassments of my brother.

Madame Dalancourt—The embarrassments of your brother!

Angelica—Yes; no one knows them better than you.

Madame Dalancourt—What do you say? Explain yourself, if you please.

Angelica—It is needless.

Enter GERONTE, then PICCARDO.

Geronte [*Calls.*].—Piccardo!

Piccardo—Here, sir. [*Comes out of Geronte's apartment.*]

Geronte [*With impatience.*].—Well, where is Dorval?

Piccardo—He is waiting for you, sir, in your room.

Geronte—He in my room, and you said nothing of it?

Piccardo—You did not give me time, sir.

Geronte [*Sees Angelica and Madame Dalancourt; speaks to Angelica, turning as he speaks toward Madame Dalancourt, that she may hear him.*]. What are you doing here? I wish to have nothing to do with your family. Go away!

Angelica—My dear uncle—

Geronte—I tell you, go. [*Exit Angelica, mortified.*]

Madame Dalancourt—I ask your pardon, sir.

Geronte [*Turning toward the door by which Angelica has gone out, but from time to time looking at Madame Dalancourt.*].—This is strange. This is impertinent. She wants to annoy me. There is another staircase for going down into the other apartment. I will shut this door.

Madame Dalancourt—Do not be offended, sir; as to myself, I assure you—

Geronte [Wishes to go into his room, but not to pass Madame Dalancourt, and says to Piccardo.]—Tell me, is Dorval in my room?

Piccardo—Yes, sir.

Madame Dalancourt [Perceiving the embarrassment of Geronte, steps back.]—Pass on, sir; I will not be in your way.

Geronte [Passing, salutes her.]—Madame!—I will shut the door. [Goes into his room, and Piccardo follows him.]

Madame Dalancourt—What a strange character; but it is not this that disturbs me. What distresses me is the anxious manner of my husband, and Angelica's words. I doubt; I fear; I wish to know the truth, but dread to discover it.

ACT II

Scene First

GERONTE and DORVAL.

Geronte—Let us go on with our game, and talk no more of it.

Dorval—But it concerns your nephew.

Geronte—A blockhead! A helpless creature, who is the slave of his wife, and the victim of his vanity.

Dorval—More gentleness, my friend, more gentleness.

Geronte—And you, with your calmness, will drive me mad.

Dorval—What I say is right.

Geronte—Take a chair. [Sits.]

Dorval [In a compassionate tone, while he is going to the chair.]—Poor young man!

Geronte—Let us see the game of yesterday.

Dorval [In the same tone.]-You will lose—

Geronte—Perhaps not; let us see—

Dorval—I say you will lose—

Geronte—No, I am sure not.

Dorval—Unless you assist him, you will certainly lose him.

Geronte—Lose whom?

Dorval—Your nephew.

Geronte [With impatience.]-Eh! I was speaking of the game. Sit down.

Dorval—I will play willingly, but first listen to me—

Geronte—You are always talking to me of Dalancourt.

Dorval—Well, if it be so?

Geronte—I will not listen to you.

Dorval—Then you hate him—

Geronte—No, sir, I hate nobody.

Dorval—But if you do not wish—

Geronte—No more—play! Let us go on with the game, or I shall go away.

Dorval—One single word, and I have done.

Geronte—Very well.

Dorval—You have some property?

Geronte—Yes, thank Heaven!

Dorval—More than you want?

Geronte—Yes, some over, with which I can serve my friends.

Dorval—And you will give nothing to your nephew?

Geronte—Not a farthing.

Dorval—It follows—

Geronte—It follows?

Dorval—That you hate him.

Geronte—It follows that you do not know what you say. I hate, I detest his manner of thinking, his abominable conduct; to give him money would be only to nourish his vanity, his prodigality, his folly. Let him change his system, and I will change when he does. I

wish repentance to deserve favors, not favors to prevent repentance.

Dorval [After a moment's silence, he seems convinced, and says, with much gentleness.]—Let us play.

Geronte—Let us play.

Dorval—I am distressed at it.

Geronte—Check to the king. } [Playing.]

Dorval—And this poor girl! }

Geronte—Who?

Dorval—Angelica.

Geronte [Leaves the game.]—Ah, as to her, it is another affair. Speak to me of her.

Dorval—She must suffer, too.

Geronte—I have thought of it, and have foreseen it. I shall marry her to some one.

Dorval—Excellent! she deserves it.

Geronte—Is she not a most engaging young lady?

Dorval—Yes, truly.

Geronte—Happy is the man who shall possess her.
[Reflects a moment.] Dorval!

Dorval—My friend?

Geronte—Hear me.

Dorval [Rising.]—What would you say?

Geronte—If you wish her, I will give her to you.

Dorval—Who?

Geronte—My niece.

Dorval—What?

Geronte—What! what! are you deaf? Do you not understand me? [Animated.] I speak clearly—if you wish to have her, I give her to you.

Dorval—Ah! ah!

Geronte—And if you marry her, besides her fortune, I will give her of my own a hundred thousand francs. Eh! what say you to it?

Dorval—My friend, you do me much honor.

Geronte—I know who you are; I am certain by this step to secure the happiness of my niece.

Dorval—But—

Geronte—But what?

Dorval—Her brother?

Geronte—Her brother! Her brother has nothing to do with it; it is for me to dispose of her; the law, the will of my brother—I am master here. Come, make haste, decide upon the spot.

Dorval—Your proposal is not to be decided on in a moment. You are too impetuous.

Geronte—I see no obstacle; if you love her, if you esteem her, if she suits you, it is all done.

Dorval—But—

Geronte—But—but—Let us hear your but.

Dorval—Does the discrepancy between sixteen and forty-five years appear to you a trifle?

Geronte—Nothing at all. You are still a young man; and I know Angelica, she has no foolish notions.

Dorval—She may have a liking for some other person?

Geronte—She has none.

Dorval—Are you sure of it?

Geronte—Most certain; quick—let us conclude it. I will go to my notary's; he shall draw up the contract: she is yours.

Dorval—Softly, my friend, softly.

Geronte [With heat.]—What now? Do you wish still to vex me—to annoy me with your slowness—with your cold blood?

Dorval—Then you wish—

Geronte—Yes, to give you a sensible, honest, virtuous girl, with a hundred thousand crowns for her fortune, and a hundred thousand livres at her marriage. Perhaps I affront you?

Dorval—By no means; you do me an honor I do not deserve.

Geronte [With warmth.]—Your modesty on this occasion is most inopportune.

Dorval—Do not get angry; do you wish me to take her?

Geronte—Yes.

Dorval—Then I take her—

Geronte [With joy.]—Indeed!

Dorval—But on condition—

Geronte—Of what!

Dorval—That Angelica consents to it.

Geronte—Do you make no other obstacle?

Dorval—No other.

Geronte—I am delighted. I answer for her.

Dorval—So much the better if you are sure.

Geronte—Most sure—most certain. Embrace me, my dear nephew.

Dorval—Let us embrace, my dear uncle.

[Dalancourt enters by the middle door; sees his uncle; listens as he passes; goes toward his own apartment, but stops at his own door to listen.]

Geronte—This is the happiest day of my life.

Dorval—My dear friend, how very kind you are!

Geronte—I am going to the notary's. This very day it shall all be concluded. [Calls.] Piccardo!

Enter PICCARDO.

Geronte—My cane and hat. [Exit Piccardo.]

Dorval—I will now go home.

[Piccardo returns, and gives his master his cane and hat, and withdraws. Dalancourt is still at his door.]

Geronte—No, no, you must wait here for me; I will soon return. You must dine with me.

Dorval—I have to write; I must send for my agent, who is a league from Paris.

Geronte—Go into my room and write; send your letter by Piccardo. Yes, Piccardo will carry it himself; Piccardo is an excellent young man—sensible—faithful. Sometimes I scold him, but I am very fond of him.

Dorval—Well, since you are determined, it shall be so; I will write in your room.

Geronte—Now it is all concluded.

Dorval—Yes, we agree.

Geronte [Taking his hand.]—Your word of honor?

Dorval [Giving his hand.]—My word of honor.

Geronte [Joyfully.]—My dear nephew! [Exit.]

Scene Second

DALANCOURT and DORVAL.

Dorval—In truth, all this seems to me a dream. I marry!—I, who never have thought of such a thing!

Dalancourt—Ah, my dear friend, I know not how to express my gratitude to you.

Dorval—For what?

Dalancourt—Did I not hear what my uncle said? He loves me, he feels for me; he has gone to his notary; he has given you his word of honor. I see plainly what you have done for me; I am the most fortunate man in the world.

Dorval—Do not flatter yourself so much, my dear friend, for the good fortune you imagine has not the least foundation in truth.

Dalancourt—How then?

Dorval—I hope, in time, to be able to do you a service with him; and hereafter I may have some title to interest myself in your behalf; but till then—

Dalancourt [With warmth.]—For what, then, did he give you his word of honor?

Dorval—I will tell you at once; he did me the honor to propose your sister to me as a wife.

Dalancourt [With joy.]—My sister! Do you accept?

Dorval—Yes, if you approve it.

Dalancourt—You overwhelm me with joy; you surprise me. In regard to her fortune, you know my situation.

Dorval—About that we will say nothing.

Dalancourt—My dear brother, let me, with all my heart, embrace you.

Dorval—I flatter myself that your uncle on this occasion—

Dalancourt—Here is a connection to which I shall owe my happiness. I am in great need of it. I have been to my lawyer's, and did not find him.

Enter MADAME DALANCOURT.

Dalancourt [Sees his wife.]—Ah, Madame!

Madame Dalancourt [To Dalancourt.]—I have been waiting for you with impatience. I heard your voice.

Dalancourt—My dear, here is Signor Dorval; I present him to you as my brother-in-law, as the husband of Angelica.

Madame Dalancourt [With joy]—Indeed!

Dorval—I shall be highly pleased, Madame, if my happiness meets with your approbation.

Madame Dalancourt—I am rejoiced at it, sir; I congratulate you with all my heart. [Aside.] What did he mean by speaking of the embarrassments of my husband?

Dalancourt [To Dorval.]—Is my sister informed of it?

Dorval—I think not.

Madame Dalancourt [Aside.]—Then it was not Dalancourt who made the match.

Dalancourt—Do you wish me to bring her here?

Dorval—No, do not bring her; there may still be a difficulty.

Dalancourt—What is it?

Dorval—Her consent.

Dalancourt—Fear nothing; I know Angelica, and your circumstances and merit. Leave it to me; I will speak to my sister.

Dorval—No, my dear friend, do not, I beg you, do not let us spoil the affair; leave it to Signor Geronte.

Dalancourt—As you please.

Madame Dalancourt [Aside.]—I comprehend nothing of all this.

Dorval—I am going into your uncle's room to write; he has given me permission, and he has told me expressly to wait for him there, so excuse me; we shall soon see each other again.

[Exit into Geronte's apartment.]

Scene Third

DALANCOURT and MADAME DALANCOURT.

Madame Dalancourt—From what I hear, it appears you are not the person who marries your sister?

Dalancourt [Embarrassed.]—My uncle marries her.

Madame Dalancourt—Has your uncle mentioned it to you? Has he asked your consent?

Dalancourt [With a little warmth.]—My consent! Did you not see Dorval? Did he not tell me of it? Do you not call this asking my consent?

Madame Dalancourt [A little warmly.]—Yes. It is an act of civility on the part of Dorval, but your uncle has said nothing to you.

Dalancourt [Embarrassed.]—What do you mean by that?

Madame Dalancourt—I mean, he thinks us of no account.

Dalancourt [Warmly.]—You take the worst view of everything. This is terrible! You are insupportable.

Madame Dalancourt [Mortified.]—I insupportable! you find me insupportable! [With much tenderness.] Ah, my husband! this is the first time such an expression has ever escaped from your lips. You must be in a state of great uneasiness so to forget your affection for me.

Dalancourt [Aside.] Ah! too true.—My dear wife, I ask your pardon with all my heart. But you know my uncle; do you desire to offend him still more? Do you wish me to hinder my sister? The match is a good one; nothing can be said against it. My uncle has chosen it; so much the better. Here is one embarrassment the less for you and me. [With joy.]

Madame Dalancourt—Come, come, I am glad you take it in good part; I praise and admire your conduct. But permit me to make one suggestion: Who is to attend to the necessary preparations for a young lady about to be married? Is your uncle to have this trouble? Will it be proper? will it be correct?

Dalancourt—You are right; but there is time, we will talk of it.

Madame Dalancourt—Hear me: you know I love Angelica. The ungrateful girl does not deserve I should care for her; but she is your sister.

Dalancourt—How! you call my sister ungrateful! Why so?

Madame Dalancourt—Do not let us speak of it now; some other time, when we are alone, I will explain to you. And then—

Dalancourt—No; I wish to hear it now.

Madame Dalancourt—Have patience, my dear husband.

Dalancourt—No, I tell you; I wish to know at once.

Madame Dalancourt—Well, as you wish it, I must satisfy you.

Dalancourt [Aside.]—How I tremble!

Madame Dalancourt—Your sister—

Dalancourt—Proceed.

Madame Dalancourt—I believe she is too much on your uncle's side.

Dalancourt—Why?

Madame Dalancourt—She told me—yes, me—that your affairs were embarrassed, and that—

Dalancourt—That my affairs were embarrassed—and do you believe it?

Madame Dalancourt—No. But she spoke to me in such a manner as to make me think she suspected I was the cause of it, or at least, that I had contributed to it.

Dalancourt [A little excitedly.]—You! she suspects you!

Madame Dalancourt—Do not be angry, my dear husband. I know very well her want of judgment.

Dalancourt [With feeling.]—My dear wife!

Madame Dalancourt—Do not be distressed. Believe me, I shall think no more of it. It all arises from him; your uncle is the cause of it all.

Dalancourt—Oh no! my uncle has not a bad heart.

Madame Dalancourt—He not a bad heart? Heavens! the worst in the world! Has he not shown it to me?—But I forgive him.

Enter a SERVANT.

Servant—Here is a letter for you, sir.

Dalancourt—Give it to me. [He takes the letter. Exit Servant.] Let us see it. [Agitated.] This is the hand of my lawyer. [Opens the letter.]

Madame Dalancourt—What does he write?

Dalancourt—Excuse me for a moment. [He retires apart, reads, and shows displeasure.]

Madame Dalancourt [Aside.]—There must be some bad news.

Dalancourt [Aside, after reading the letter.]—I am ruined!

Madame Dalancourt [Aside.]—My heart beats!

Dalancourt [Aside.]—My poor wife! what will become of her? How can I tell her?—I have not the courage.

Madame Dalancourt [Weeping.]—My dear Dalancourt, tell me, what is it? Trust your wife: am I not the best friend you have?

Dalancourt—Take it and read: this is my situation. [Gives her the letter.] [Exit.]

MADAME DALANCOURT, alone.

Madame Dalancourt—I tremble. [Reads.] “Sir, all is lost; the creditors will not subscribe The decree was confirmed. I inform you of it as soon as possible; be on your guard, for your arrest is ordered.”—What do I read? what do I read? My husband in debt, in danger of losing his liberty! Can it be possible? He does not gamble, he has no bad habits; he is not addicted to unusual luxury. —By his own fault—may it not then be my fault? Oh, God! what a dreadful ray of light breaks in upon me! The reproofs of Angelica, the hatred of Signor Geronte, the contempt he shows for me, day after day! The bandage is torn from my eyes: I see the errors of my husband, I see my own. Too much love has been his fault, my inexperience has made me blind. Dalancourt is culpable, and I perhaps am equally so. What remedy is there in this cruel situation? His uncle only—yes—his uncle can help him;—but Dalancourt—he

must be now in a state of humiliation and distress—and if I am the cause of it, though involuntarily, why do I not go myself? Yes—I ought to throw myself at Geronte's feet—but, with his severe, unyielding temper, can I flatter myself I shall make any impression on him? Shall I go and expose myself to his rudeness? Ah! what matters it? Ah! what is my mortification compared to the horrible condition of my husband? Yes, I will run! This thought alone ought to give me courage.

[She goes toward Geronte's apartment.]

Enter MARTUCCIA.

Martuccia—Madame, what are you doing here? Signor Dalancourt is in despair.

Madame Dalancourt—Heavens! I fly to his assistance.

[Exit.

Martuccia—What misfortunes!—what confusion! If it be true she is the cause of it, she well deserves—Who comes here?

Enter VALERIO.

Martuccia—Why, sir, do you come here now? You have chosen an unfortunate time. All the family is overwhelmed with sorrow.

Valerio—I do not doubt it. I just come from Signor Dalancourt's lawyer. I have offered him my purse and my credit.

Martuccia—This is a praiseworthy action. Nothing can be more generous than your conduct.

Valerio—Is Signor Geronte at home?

Martuccia—No; the servant told me he saw him with his notary.

Valerio—With his notary?

Martuccia—Yes; he is always occupied with some business. But do you wish to speak with him?

Valerio—Yes, I wish to speak with them all. I see with sorrow the confusion of Dalancourt's affairs. I am alone. I have property, and can dispose of it. I love Angelica, and am come to offer to marry her without a portion, and to share with her my lot and my fortune.

Martuccia—This resolution is worthy of you. No one could show more esteem, more love, and more generosity.

Valerio—Do you think I may flatter myself?—

Martuccia—Yes, and especially as she enjoys the favor of her uncle, and he desires to marry her.

Valerio [With joy.]—He desires to marry her?

Martuccia—Yes.

Valerio—But if he wishes to marry her, he also wishes to propose a match that is to his taste?

Martuccia [After a moment's silence.]—It may be so.

Valerio—And can this be any comfort to me?

Martuccia—Why not? [To Angelica, who enters timidly.] Come in, my young lady.

Angelica—I am terribly frightened.

Valerio [To Angelica.]—What is the matter?

Angelica—My poor brother—

Martuccia—Is he just the same?

Angelica—Rather better. He is a little more tranquil.

Martuccia—Hear me. This gentleman has told me something very consoling for you and for your brother.

Angelica—For him too?

Martuccia—If you knew what a sacrifice he is disposed to make!

Valerio [Aside to Martuccia.]—Say nothing of it. [Turning to Angelica.] Can any sacrifice be too great for you?

Martuccia—But it must be mentioned to Signor Geronte.

Valerio—My dear friend, if you will take the trouble.

Martuccia—Willingly. What shall I say to him? Let

us see. Advise me. But I hear some one. [Goes toward the apartment of Signor Geronte.] [To Valerio.] It is Signor Dorval. Do not let him see you. Let us go into my room, and there we can talk at our ease.

Valerio [To Angelica.] If you see your brother—

Martuccia—Come, sir, let us go—quick. [Goes out and takes him with her.]

Scene Fourth

ANGELICA, then DORVAL.

Angelica [Aside.]—What have I to do with Signor Dorval? I can go away.

Dorval—Mademoiselle Angelica!

Angelica—Sir?

Dorval—Have you seen your uncle? Has he told you nothing?

Angelica—I saw him this morning, sir.

Dorval—Before he went out of the house?

Angelica—Yes, sir.

Dorval—Has he returned?

Angelica—No, sir.

Dorval [Aside.]—Good. She knows nothing of it.

Angelica—Excuse me, sir. Is there anything new in which I am concerned?

Dorval—Your uncle takes much interest in you.

Angelica [With modesty.]—He is very kind.

Dorval [Seriously.]—He thinks often of you.

Angelica—It is fortunate for me.

Dorval—He thinks of marrying you. [Angelica appears modest.] What say you to it? Would you like to be married?

Angelica—I depend on my uncle.

Dorval—Shall I say anything more to you on the subject?

Angelica [With a little curiosity.]—But—as you please, sir.

Dorval—The choice of a husband is already made.

Angelica [Aside.]—Oh, heavens! I tremble.

Dorval [Aside.]—She seems to be pleased.

Angelica [Trembling.]—Sir, I am curious to know—

Dorval—What, Mademoiselle?

Angelica—Do you know who is intended for me?

Dorval—Yes, and you know him, too.

Angelica [With joy.]—I know him too?

Dorval—Certainly, you know him.

Angelica—May I, sir, have the boldness—

Dorval—Speak, Mademoiselle.

Angelica—To ask you the name of the young man?

Dorval—The name of the young man?

Angelica—Yes, if you know him.

Dorval—Suppose he were not so young?

Angelica [Aside, with agitation.]—Good heavens!

Dorval—You are sensible—you depend on your uncle—

Angelica [Trembling.]—Do you think, sir, my uncle would sacrifice me?

Dorval—What do you mean by sacrificing you?

Angelica—Mean—without the consent of my heart. My uncle is so good—But who could have advised him—who could have proposed this match? [With temper.]

Dorval [A little hurt.]—But this match—Mademoiselle—Suppose it were I?

Angelica [With joy.]—You, sir? Heaven grant it!

Dorval [Pleased.]—Heaven grant it?

Angelica—Yes, I know you; I know you are reasonable. You are sensible; I can trust you. If you have given my uncle this advice, if you have proposed this match, I hope you will now find some means of making him change his plan.

Dorval [Aside.]—Eh! this is not so bad.—[To Angelica.] Mademoiselle—

Angelica [Distressed.]—Signor?

Dorval [With feeling.]—Is your heart engaged?

Angelica—Ah, sir—

Dorval—I understand you.

Angelica—Have pity on me!

Dorval [Aside.]—I said so, I foresaw right; it is fortunate for me I am not in love—yet I began to perceive some little symptoms of it.

Angelica—But you do not tell me, sir.

Dorval—But, Mademoiselle—

Angelica—You have perhaps some particular interest in the person they wish me to marry?

Dorval—A little.

Angelica [With temper and firmness.]—I tell you I shall hate him.

Dorval [Aside.]—Poor girl! I am pleased with her sincerity.

Angelica—Come, have compassion; be generous.

Dorval—Yes, I will be so, I promise you; I will speak to your uncle in your favor, and will do all I can to make you happy.

Angelica [With joy and transport.]—Oh, how dear a man you are! You are my benefactor, my father. [Takes his hand.]

Dorval—My dear girl!

Enter GERONTE.

Geronte [In his hasty manner, with animation.]—Excellent, excellent! Courage, my children, I am delighted with you. [Angelica retires, mortified; Dorval smiles.] How! does my presence alarm you? I do not condemn this proper show of affection. You have done well, Dorval, to inform her. Come, my niece, embrace your future husband.

Angelica [In consternation.]—What do I hear?

Dorval [Aside and smiling.]—Now I am unmasked.

Geronte [To Angelica, with warmth.]—What scene is this? Your modesty is misplaced. When I am not present, you are near enough to each other; when I come in, you go far apart. Come here.—[To Dorval, with anger.] And do you too come here.

Dorval [Laughing.]—Softly, my friend.

Geronte—Why do you laugh? Do you feel your happiness? I am very willing you should laugh, but do not put me in a passion; do you hear, you laughing gentleman? Come here and listen to me.

Dorval—But listen yourself.

Geronte [To Angelica, and endeavoring to take her hand.] Come near, both of you.

Angelica [Weeping.]—My uncle!

Geronte—Weeping! What's the matter, my child? I believe you are making a jest of me. [Takes her hand, and carries her by force to the middle of the stage; then turns to Dorval, and says to him, with an appearance of heat.] You shall escape me no more.

Dorval—At least let me speak.

Geronte—No, no!

Angelica—My dear uncle—

Geronte [With warmth.]—No, no. [He changes his tone and becomes serious.] I have been to my notary's, and have arranged everything; he has taken a note of it in my presence, and will soon bring the contract here for us to subscribe.

Dorval—But will you listen to me?

Geronte—No, no. As to her fortune, my brother had the weakness to leave it in the hands of his son; this will no doubt cause some obstacle on his part, but it will not embarrass me. Everyone suffers who has transactions with him. The fortune cannot be lost, and in any event I will be responsible for it.

Angelica [*Aside.*].—I can bear this no longer.

Dorval [*Embarrassed.*].—All proceeds well, but—

Geronte—But what?

Dorval—The young lady may have something to say in this matter. [*Looks at Angelica.*]

Angelica [*Hastily and trembling.*].—I, sir?

Geronte—I should like to know if she can say anything against what I do, what I order, and what I wish. My wishes, my orders, and what I do, are all for her good. Do you understand me?

Dorval—Then I must speak myself.

Geronte—What have you to say?

Dorval—That I am very sorry, but this marriage cannot take place.

Geronte—Not take place! [*Angelica retreats frightened; Dorval also steps back two paces. To Dorval.*] You have given me your word of honor.

Dorval—Yes, on condition—

Geronte [*Turning to Angelica.*].—It must then be this impertinent one. If I could believe it! If I had any reason to suspect it! [*Threatens her.*]

Dorval [*Seriously.*].—No, sir, you are mistaken.

Geronte [*To Dorval. Angelica seizes the opportunity and makes her escape.*] It is you, then, who refuse? So you abuse my friendship and affection for you!

Dorval [*Raises his voice.*].—But hear reason—

Geronte—What reason? what reason? There is no reason. I am a man of honor, and if you are so too, it shall be done at once. [*Turns round and calls.*] Angelica!

Dorval—What possesses the man? He will resort to violence on the spot. [*Runs off.*]

GERONTE, alone.

Geronte—Where is she gone? Angelica! Hallo! who's there? Piccardo! Martuccia! Pietro! Cortese!—But I'll find her. It is you I want. [*Turns round, and, not*

seeing Dorval, remains motionless.] What! he treat me so! [Calls.] Dorval! my friend! Dorval—Dorval! my friend! Oh, shameful—ungrateful! Hallo! Is no one there? Piccardo!

Enter PICCARDO.

Piccardo—Here, sir.

Geronte—You rascal! Why don't you answer?

Piccardo—Pardon me, sir, here I am.

Geronte—Shameful! I called you ten times.

Piccardo—I am sorry, but—

Geronte—Ten times! It is scandalous.

Piccardo [Aside, and angry.]—He is in a fury now.

Geronte—Have you seen Dorval?

Piccardo—Yes, sir.

Geronte—Where is he?

Piccardo—He is gone.

Geronte—How is he gone?

Piccardo [Roughly.]—He is gone as other people go.

Geronte—Ah, insolent! do you answer your master in this manner? [Very much offended, he threatens him and makes him retreat.]

Piccardo—[Very angrily.]—Give me my discharge, sir.

Geronte—Your discharge—worthless fellow! [Threatens him and makes him retreat. Piccardo falls between the chair and the table. Geronte runs to his assistance and helps him up.]

Piccardo—Oh! [He leans on the chair, and shows much pain.]

Geronte—Are you hurt? Are you hurt?

Piccardo—Very much hurt; you have crippled me.

Geronte—Oh, I am sorry! Can you walk?

Piccardo [Still angry.]—I believe so, sir. [He tries, and walks badly.]

Geronte [Sharply.]—Go on.

Piccardo [Mortified.]—Do you drive me away, sir?

Geronte [Warmly.]—No. Go to your wife's house, that you may be taken care of. [Pulls out his purse and offers him money.] Take this to get cured.

Piccardo [Aside, with tenderness.]—What a master!

Geronte—Take it. [Giving him money.]

Piccardo [With modesty.]—No, sir, I hope it will be nothing.

Geronte—Take it, I tell you.

Piccardo [Still refusing it.]—Sir—

Geronte [Very warmly.]—What! you refuse my money? Do you refuse it from pride, or spite, or hatred? Do you believe I did it on purpose? Take this money. Take it. Come, don't put me in a passion.

Piccardo—Do not get angry, sir. I thank you for all your kindness. [Takes the money.]

Geronte—Go quickly.

Piccardo—Yes, sir. [Limps.]

Geronte—Go slowly.

Piccardo—Yes, sir.

Geronte—Wait, wait; take my cane.

Piccardo—Sir—

Geronte—Take it, I tell you! I wish you to do it.

Piccardo [Takes the cane.]—What goodness! [Exit.

Enter MARTUCCIA.

Geronte—It is the first time in my life that—Plague on my temper! [Taking long strides.] It is Dorval who put me in a passion.

Martuccia—Do you wish to dine, sir?

Geronte—May the devil take you! [Runs out and shuts himself in his room.]

Martuccia—Well, well! He is in a rage: I can do nothing for Angelica to-day; Valerio can go away.

[Exit.

ACT III

Scene First

PICCARDO and MARTUCCIA.

Martuccia—What, have you returned already?

Piccardo [With his master's cane.]—Yes, I limp a little: but I was more frightened than hurt; it was not worth the money my master gave me to get cured.

Martuccia—It seems misfortunes are sometimes profitable.

Piccardo [With an air of satisfaction.]—Poor master! On my honor, this instance of his goodness affected me so much, I could hardly help shedding tears; if he had broken my leg, I should have forgiven him.

Martuccia—What a heart he has! Pity he has so great a failing.

Piccardo—But what man is there without defects?

Martuccia—Go and look for him; you know he has not dined yet.

Piccardo—Why not?

Martuccia—My son, there are misfortunes, terrible misfortunes, in this house.

Piccardo—I know all; I met your nephew, he told me all: this is the reason I have returned so soon. Does my master know it?

Martuccia—I think not.

Piccardo—Ah, how it will distress him!

Martuccia—Certainly—and poor Angelica.

Piccardo—But Valerio?

Martuccia—Valerio—Valerio is here now; he will not go away. He is still in the apartment of Signor Dalancourt: encourages the brother, takes care of the sister, consoles Madame;—one weeps, another sighs, the other is in despair; all is in confusion.

Piccardo—Did you not promise to speak to my master?

Martuccia—Yes, I should have spoken to him, but he is too angry just now.

Piccardo—I am going to look for him, to carry him his cane.

Martuccia—Go; and if you see the tempest a little calmed, tell him something concerning the unhappy state of his nephew.

Piccardo—Yes, I'll speak to him, and I'll let you know what passes. [Opens the door softly, enters the room, and then shuts it.]

Martuccia—Yes, dear friend, go softly.—This Piccardo is an excellent young man, amiable, polite, obliging; he is the only person in the house to my liking. I do not so easily become friends with everybody.

Enter DORVAL.

Dorval [In a low tone, and smiling.]—Ah, Martuccia!

Martuccia—Your servant, sir.

Dorval—Is Signor Geronte still angry?

Martuccia—It would not be strange if the storm were over. You know him better than any one else.

Dorval—He is very angry with me.

Martuccia—With you, sir? He angry with you?

Dorval [Smiles.]—There is no doubt of it; but it is nothing; I know him. I am sure as soon as we meet he will be the first to embrace me.

Martuccia—Nothing is more likely. He loves you, esteems you, you are his only friend. It is singular—he, a man always in a passion, and you—I say it with respect—the most tranquil man in the world.

Dorval—It is exactly for this reason our friendship has continued so long.

Martuccia—Go and look for him.

Dorval—No; it is too soon. I wish first to see Angelica. Where is she?

Martuccia—With her brother. You know the misfortunes of her brother?

Dorval [With an expression of sorrow.]—Ah, too well; everybody is talking of them.

Martuccia—And what do they say?

Dorval—Don't ask me: the good pity him, the hard-hearted make a jest of him, and the ungrateful abandon him.

Martuccia—Oh, heaven! And the poor girl?

Dorval—Must I speak of her too?

Martuccia—May I ask how she will fare in this confusion? I take so much interest in her that you ought to tell me.

Dorval [Smiles.]—I have learned that one Valerio—

Martuccia—Ah, Valerio!

Dorval—Do you know him?

Martuccia—Very well, sir; it is all my own work.

Dorval—So much the better; will you aid me?

Martuccia—Most willingly.

Dorval—I must go and be certain whether Angelica—

Martuccia—And also whether Valerio—

Dorval—Yes, I will go to him too.

Martuccia—Go then into Dalancourt's apartment; you will there kill two birds with one stone.

Dorval—How?

Martuccia—He is there.

Dorval—Valerio?

Martuccia—Yes.

Dorval—I am glad of it; I will go at once.

Martuccia—Stop; shall I not tell him you are coming?

Dorval—Good! such ceremony with my brother-in-law!

Martuccia—Your brother-in-law?

Dorval—Yes.

Martuccia—How?

Dorval—Do you not know?

Martuccia—Nothing at all.

Dorval—Then you shall know another time. [Goes into Dalancourt's apartment.]

Martuccia—He is out of his senses.

Enter GERONTE.

Geronte [Speaks while he is turning toward the door of his room.]—Stop there, I will send the letter by some one else; stop there, it shall be so. [Turns to Martuccia.] Martuccia!

Martuccia—Sir?

Geronte—Get a servant to take this letter directly to Dorval. [Turns toward the door of his apartment.] He is not well, he walks lame, and yet he would take it. [To Martuccia.] Go.

Martuccia—But, sir—

Geronte—Well, let us hear.

Martuccia—But Dorval—

Geronte [Impatiently.]—Yes, to Dorval's house.

Martuccia—He is here.

Geronte—Who?

Martuccia—Dorval.

Geronte—Dorval here?

Martuccia—Yes, sir.

Geronte—Where is he?

Martuccia—In Signor Dalancourt's room.

Geronte [Angrily.]—In Dalancourt's room! Dorval in Dalancourt's room! Now I see how it is, I understand it all. Go and tell Dorval from me—but no—I do not want you to go into that cursed room; if you set your foot in it, I will discharge you. Call one of the servants of that fellow—no, I don't want any of them—go yourself—yes, yes, tell him to come directly—do you hear?

Martuccia—Shall I go, or not go?

Geronte—Go! don't make me more impatient. [Martuccia goes into Dalancourt's room.]

GERONTE, alone.

Geronte—Yes, it must be so; Dorval has discovered into what a terrible abyss this wretched man has fallen; yes, he knew it before I did, and if Piccardo had not told me, I should be still in the dark. It is exactly so. Dorval fears a connection with a ruined man; that is it. But I must look further into it to be more certain. Yet why not tell me? I would have persuaded him—I would have convinced him.—But why did he not tell me? He will say, perhaps, that my violence did not give him an opportunity. This is no excuse: he should have waited, he should not have gone away; my resentment would have been over, and he might have spoken to me. Unworthy, treacherous, perfidious nephew! you have sacrificed your happiness and your honor. I love you, culpable as you are. Yes, I love you too much; but I will discard you from my heart and from my thoughts. Go hence—go and perish in some other place. But where can he go? No matter, I'll think of him no more;—your sister alone interests me; she only deserves my tenderness, my kindness. Dorval is my friend; Dorval shall marry her. I will give them all my estate—I will leave the guilty to their punishment, but will never abandon the innocent.

Scene Second

Enter DALANCOURT.

Dalancourt—Ah, my uncle, hear me, for pity's sake! [He throws himself in great agitation at Geronte's feet.]

Geronte [Sees Dalancourt, then draws back a little.]
—What do you want? Rise.

Dalancourt [In the same posture.]—My dear uncle, you see the most unhappy of men; have mercy! listen to me!

Geronte [A little moved, but still in anger.]—Rise, I say.

Dalancourt [On his knees.]—You, who have a heart so generous, so feeling, will you abandon me for a fault which is the fault of love only, and an honest, virtuous love? I have certainly done wrong in not profiting by your advice, in disregarding your paternal tenderness; but, my dear uncle, in the name of your brother, to whom I owe my life, of that blood which flows in the veins of us both, let me move you—let me soften your feelings.

Geronte [By degrees, relents, wipes his eyes, yet not letting Dalancourt see, and says in a low tone.]—What! you have still the courage?

Dalancourt—It is not the loss of fortune that afflicts me; a sentiment more worthy of you oppresses me—my honor. Can your bear the disgrace of a nephew? I ask nothing of you; if I can preserve my reputation, I give you my word, for myself and my wife, that want shall have no terrors for us, if, in the midst of our misery, we can have the consolation of an unsullied character, our mutual love, and your affection and esteem.

Geronte—Wretched man! you deserve—but I am weak; this foolish regard for blood speaks in favor of this ingrate. Rise, sir; I will pay your debts, and perhaps place you in a situation to contract others.

Dalancourt [Moved.]—Ah, no, my uncle! I promise you, you shall see in my conduct hereafter—

Geronte—What conduct, inconsiderate man? That of an infatuated husband who suffers himself to be guided by the caprices of his wife, a vain, presumptuous, thoughtless woman—

Dalancourt—No, I swear to you, my wife is not in fault; you do not know her.

Geronte [Still more excited.]—You defend her? You maintain what is false in my presence? Take care! but

a little more, and on account of your wife I will retract my promise; yes, yes, I will retract it—you shall have nothing of mine. Your wife!—I cannot bear her. I will not see her.

Dalancourt—Ah, uncle, you tear my heart!

Enter MADAME DALANCOURT.

Madame Dalancourt—Ah, sir! you think me the cause of all the misfortunes of your nephew; it is right that I alone should bear the punishment. The ignorance in which I have lived till now, I see, is not a sufficient excuse in your eyes. Young, inexperienced, I have suffered myself to be guided by a husband who loved me. The world had attractions for me; evil examples seduced me. I was satisfied, and thought myself happy, but I am guilty in appearance, and that is enough. That my husband may be worthy of your kindness, I submit to your fatal decree. I will withdraw from your presence, yet I ask one favor of you: moderate your anger against me; pardon me—my youth—have compassion on my husband, whom too much love—

Geronte—Ah, Madame, perhaps you think to overcome me?

Madame Dalancourt—Oh, heaven! Is there no hope? Ah, my dear Dalancourt, I have then ruined you! I die.
[Falls on a sofa.]

Geronte [Disturbed, moved with tenderness.]—Hallo! who's there? Martuccia!

Enter MARTUCCIA.

Martuccia—Here, sir.

Geronte—Look there—quick—go—see to her; do something for her assistance.

Martuccia—My lady! What's the matter?

Geronte [Giving a vial to Martuccia.]—Take it. Here's some Cologne. [To Dalancourt.] What is the matter?

Dalancourt—Ah, my uncle!

Geronte [To Madame Dalancourt, in a rough tone.]—How are you?

Madame Dalancourt [Rising languidly, and in a weak voice.]—You are too kind, sir, to interest yourself in me. Do not mind my weakness—feelings will show themselves. I shall recover my strength. I will go, my—I will resign myself to my misfortunes.

Geronte [Affected, does not speak.]

Dalancourt [Distressed.]—Ah, uncle! can you permit—

Geronte [With warmth to Dalancourt.]—Be silent!—[To Madame Dalancourt, roughly.] Remain in this house with your husband.

Madame Dalancourt—Ah, sir! ah!

Dalancourt [With transport.]—Ah, my dear uncle!

Geronte [In a serious tone, but without anger, taking their hands.]—Hear me: my savings are not on my own account; you would one day have known it. Make use of them now; the source is exhausted, and henceforth you must be prudent. If gratitude does not influence you, honor should at least keep you right.

Madame Dalancourt—Your goodness—

Dalancourt—Your generosity—

Geronte—Enough! enough!

Martuccia—Sir—

Geronte—Do you be silent, babbler!

Martuccia—Now, sir, that you are in a humor for doing good, don't you mean to do something for Mademoiselle Angelica?

Geronte—Well thought of. Where is she?

Martuccia—She is not far off.

Geronte—And where is her betrothed?

Martuccia—Her betrothed?

Geronte—He is perhaps offended at what I said, and will not see me. Is he gone?

Martuccia—Sir—her betrothed—he is still here.

Geronte—Let him come in.

Martuccia—Angelica and her betrothed?

Geronte—Yes, Angelica and her betrothed.

Martuccia—Admirable! Directly, sir, directly. [Goes toward the door.] Come, come, my children; have no fear.

Enter VALERIO, DORVAL, and ANGELICA.

Geronte [Seeing Valerio.]—What's this? What is this other man doing here?

Martuccia—They are, sir, the betrothed and the witness.

Geronte [To Angelica.]—Come here.

Angelica [Trembling, speaks to Madame Dalancourt.]
—Ah, sister! I ought indeed to ask your pardon.

Martuccia—And I too, Madame.

Geronte [To Dorval.]—Come here, Signor Betrothed. What say you? Are you still angry? Will you not come?

Dorval—Do you speak to me?

Geronte—Yes, to you.

Dorval—Pardon me, I am only the witness.

Geronte—The witness!

Dorval—Yes. I will explain the mystery. If you had permitted me to speak—

Geronte—The mystery! [To Angelica.]—Is there any mystery?

Dorval [Serious, and in a resolute tone.]—Hear me, friends: you know Valerio; he was informed of the misfortune of the family, and had come to offer his fortune

to Dalancourt, and his hand to Angelica. He loves her, and is ready to marry her with nothing, and to settle on her an annuity of twelve thousand livres. Your character is known to me, and that you delight in good actions. I have detained him here, and have undertaken to present him.

Geronte—You had no attachment, eh? You have deceived me. I will not consent that you shall have him. This is a contrivance on both your parts, and I will never submit to it.

Angelica [Weeping.]—My dear uncle!

Valerio [In a warm and suppliant manner.]—Sir!

Dorval—You are so good!

Madame Dalancourt—You are so generous!

Martuccia—My dear master!

Geronte—Plague on my disposition! I cannot continue angry as long as I would. I could willingly beat myself. [All together repeat their entreaties, and surround him.] Be silent! let me alone! May the devil take you all! let him marry her.

Martuccia [Earnestly.]—Let him marry her without a portion!

Geronte—What, without a portion! I marry my niece without a portion! Am I not in a situation to give her a portion? I know Valerio; the generous action he has just proposed deserves a reward. Yes, let him have her portion, and the hundred thousand livres I have promised Angelica.

Valerio—What kindness!

Angelica—What goodness!

Madame Dalancourt—What a heart!

Dalancourt—What an example!

Martuccia—Bless my master!

Dorval—Bless my good friend!

[All surround him, overwhelm him with caresses, and repeat his praises.]

Geronte [Tries to rid himself of them, shouts.] Peace!
peace! Piccardo!

Enter PICCARDO.

Piccardo—Here, sir.

Geronte—We shall sup in my room; all are invited.
Dorval, in the mean time we'll have a game of chess.

THREE TRAGEDIES

BY

VITTORIO ALFIERI

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE PAZZI

MARY STUART

ANTIGONE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES LLOYD

INTRODUCTION

VITTORIO ALFIERI begins his *Autobiography* with this entertaining paragraph: "I was born in the city of Asti, in Piedmont, the 17th of January, 1749, of noble, opulent, and respectable parents. I notice these circumstances as fortunate ones to me for the following reasons. Noble birth was of great service to me in after times, for it enabled me without incurring the imputation of base or invidious motives to disparage nobility for its own sake, to unveil its follies, its abuses and its crimes, while its salutary influence prevented me from ever dishonoring the noble art that I professed. Opulence made me free and incorruptible to serve only truth. The integrity of my parents never made me feel ashamed that I was born of noble blood. Had either of these things been wanting to my birth, it would have diminished the virtue of my works, and I should probably have been either a poorer philosopher or a worse man." He tells us that in his boyhood, as a punishment for untruthfulness, he was compelled to go to mass wearing a knitted nightcap—a great humiliation, and he adds naively: "It was some time before I told another lie; and who knows but I owe it to that blessed cap that I afterward became one of the men of the fewest lies I have ever seen?"

His early education was fragmentary and unsatisfactory, but he had a strong predilection for literature. For a copy of the works of Ariosto, in four volumes, he bartered the better part of his Sunday dinners for six

months. "I had no knowledge of any of our other poets except Metastasio, whose works delighted me till I came to a chorus that interrupted the flow of feeling just as I began to penetrate the story. My master gave me some of Goldoni's comedies, which diverted me exceedingly. But the genius of the drama, whose germ was in my soul, was smothered and almost extinguished for want of nourishment and excitement, and indeed of everything else." At this time a schoolmate got young Alfieri to write his essays and translations for him. "The arguments he resorted to were really beautiful. 'If you will write my composition, I will give you two playing-balls. Here they are, well made, four colors, beautiful cloth, and very elastic. And if you won't write it, I'll give you two knocks on the head.' I thought best to take the two balls; and the master was astonished at the unexpected progress of the fellow who had hitherto shown himself a mole."

He continued his studies at the University of Turin, and in that city attended the opera, concerning which he says: "As I recall my carnival days, with the few grand operas I heard, and compare the emotions there awakened with those I now feel on returning from a performance of a composition I have not recently heard, I feel the same uncontrollable enthusiasm of soul, and my heart and intellect are as deeply agitated by every sound, especially in the parts of the contralto and the prima donna. Nothing wakes up more various or terrible feelings in my soul. I have conceived nearly all my tragedies while hearing music, or a few hours afterward."

He began the study of law, but soon abandoned it, partly from disinclination and partly because disease made study irksome; yet he read much and varied litera-

ture, from ecclesiastical history to the *Arabian Nights*. His course at the University was very erratic, and often in defiance of the rules, especially after he came into possession of his patrimony. He then obtained an ensign's commission in the army, which he soon resigned; fell in love harmlessly with a married woman; hired an apartment, in which he gave sumptuous dinners to his friends; and indulged his love for horses by buying eight fine ones. He then spent two years in travel with a tutor and a small party, visiting most of the cities of Italy, but finding little pleasure in anything except architecture and the view of the sea at Leghorn, which had a fascination for him. A year later he traveled in France, England, and Holland. At The Hague he fell violently in love with "a bride of a year," and when she rejoined her husband in Switzerland, he attempted suicide.

He bought a trunkful of standard books, in French, returned home, and devoted himself to reading and philosophical study. He tells us that the one book that pleased him more than all others was *Plutarch's Lives*. Other journeys were undertaken a few years later; and he became very familiar with the Continent, and had in London another love-affair, which, with its consequent duel, he relates with amazing frankness, as Boccaccio might have told it, adding ingenuously: "I thought that by analyzing the affair with truth and minuteness, I should unfold my character to my readers."

His very gradual approach to that which was to be his life-work is indicated in a sentence on leaving Lisbon, where he had been fortunate in the acquaintance of the Abate Caluso, whom he calls "a living Montaigne:" "On one of those delightful evenings I felt in the depths of my soul a really plebeian impulse of enthusiastic rap-

ture for the art of poetry. But it was only a transient flame, which soon went out, and I slumbered under its ashes many years." The next step was taken when he set up housekeeping in Turin, and organized a club of young men, who met there. One of their amusements was the writing of poems and articles, which (all anonymous) were thrown into a box, whence they were drawn out at random and read by the chairman. Some of the most diverting ones were written by Alfieri, and this gave him his first definite idea of devoting himself to literature. A distressing love-affair, which caused him deep mortification, led to his first serious attempt at poetry—a sonnet breaking off the connection.

Alfieri now resumed work on a fragment of a tragedy that he had written a year before, and, to keep himself at it in earnest, had his valet tie him into his chair and keep him there several hours every day. He says: "After some months of continual poetical consultations, of worn-out grammars, of wearied dictionaries, and of accumulated nonsense, I hitched together five things, which I called acts, entitling it all *Cleopatra Tragedia*. When the first act was done, instead of throwing it among the waste paper, I sent it to Father Paciandi, requesting him to prune it and give me his opinion in writing. His notes and counsels determined me to re-write it all." This tragedy was represented in Turin in June, 1775. For an afterpiece Alfieri wrote a farce entitled *The Poets*. Both plays were received enthusiastically.

He had become more familiar with the French language than with his native tongue, and he now set himself to the task of studying grammar and mastering the pure Tuscan. At the same time he, with great labor, translated into Italian tragedies that he had written in

French—*Il Filippo* and *Il Polinisi*. But he says: "In spite of all my efforts, these two tragedies always remained amphibious things, half-way between French and Italian, without being one or the other." He spent a year in studying the great Italian poets, working most industriously to conquer the language with all its possible elegance and to familiarize himself with the technic of poetry, and he translated Horaces's *Art of Poetry*.

His love of liberty and hatred of tyranny were, if possible, increased when, in the course of his travels, he barely escaped being caught in Paris at the crisis when the King was deposed and anarchy was imminent. Though provided with passports, he had difficulty in getting away from the city, accompanied by the Countess of Albany and servants, and a delay of two days would probably have resulted in their murder. Such experiences left their impress in his published works. He gave his energies, in the ten years that remained of his life, to the writing of plays, odes, and essays, some of which have a permanent place in the classic literature of Italy. For this series we have chosen three tragedies which represent his wide range of subjects, *Antigone* being Greek, *Mary Stuart*, British, and *The Conspiracy of the Pozzi*, Italian. Among his other plays are *Abel*, *Saul*, *Virginia*, *Octavina*, and *Orestes*. He wrote also an essay on *Tyranny* and five odes on the American War of Independence. Madame de Staël praised his works for their high moral and patriotic tone. A complete edition (22 volumes) was published in Pisa in 1808, five years after his death in October, 1803. Charles Edwards Lester, who was American Consul at Genoa in 1841-'45, made a translation of Alfieri's *Autobiography*, which was published in New York in 1845.

R. J.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LORENZO de' MEDICI.

GIULIANO de' MEDICI.

BIANCA de' PAZZI.

GUGLIELMO de' PAZZI.

RAIMONDO de' PAZZI.

SALVIATI.

SOLDIERS.

Scene: The State Palace in Florence.

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE PAZZI

ACT I

Scene First

GUGLIELMO, RAIMONDO.

Raimondo—To suffer, always suffer? oh, my father,
Is this the only counsel thou canst give me?
Art thou become so thoroughly a slave,
That thou no longer feel'st the heavy wrongs,
The insults of the Medicean yoke?

Guglielmo—Oh, son, I feel all keenly; and far more
I feel the public than my private wrongs.
But yet what should I do? To such a pitch
Florence by party-spirit is reduced,
That the most inoffensive word may be
Fatal to us, propitious to our tyrants.
Oh, infirm state! it is too evident,
That thou canst now change only for the worse.

Raimondo—Ah! tell me where is now the state? Or
how,

If there be one, it can be worse? Can we
Be said to live? Live those, who, full of fear,
Who, abject and suspicious, drag along
Their infamous and pining days? To us
What injury can arise? That in the place
Of shameful and inefficacious tears,
Blood should perchance be shed? And what? Dost thou
Call shedding blood the greatest injury?
Thou, that, a thousand times, with noble joy,
To me, a child, the ancient times recalled,
And execrated these degenerate days;
Thou now, like every vulgar recreant here,

Submittest to the yoke thy passive neck!

Guglielmo—There was a time, I seek not to deny it,
When, urged by intolerance of our many wrongs,
And full of anger, and elastic spirits,
I would have sacrificed, without a thought,
My wealth, my honors, and my life, to crush
The usurpation of new tyrants, raised
On our misfortunes. To the fire of youth
All things seem easy; so they seemed to me.
But finding to my great designs few friends,
And those few friends of wavering constancy,
Beholding every year that tyranny
Struck deeper roots in this impoverished soil,
And lastly being a father—all induced me
To safer, but less elevated schemes,
To turn my thoughts. The tyrants would have found
In me a weak and ineffectual foe;
Hence sought I their alliance. I bestowed
On thee their sister's hand. Since we no more
Flourished beneath the shade of liberty,
I hence would see thee and thy future son
Placed in the covert of the plumes, at least,
Of tyranny's audacious, spreading wings.

Raimondo—Protection infamous, and insecure.
Bianca, although sister of the tyrants,
Is thence not insupportable to me:
Her, and the sons which she to me has given,
Though nephews of the tyrants, I hold dear.
My blameless wife I blame not for her brothers;
Thyself I blame alone, in having mixed
Their blood with ours, O father. In this act
I would not thwart thy purpose; but at last
Thou seest the fruits of such servility.
By this alliance thou didst hope to reap
Honor and influence; but we thence have reaped
Contempt, disparagement, and infamy.

The citizens abhor us, and with reason;
 We are the tyrants' kinsmen; thence have they
 Exchanged their hatred toward us for contempt;
 And we, who were not citizens, deserve it.

Guglielmo—Thou hadst found me, in other climes, my
 son,

A spur to illustrious deeds, and not a check.
 What it has cost my not ignoble heart
 To smother indignation and to feign
 An insincere attachment, thou thyself
 Canst best conceive. E'en from thy infancy
 I have, 'tis true, discovered in thy heart
 The seeds of irritable independence:
 At first, I must confess, I saw with joy
 This bias of thy soul; but far more oft
 I inwardly regretted, when in thee
 I contemplated afterward a soul
 Too free and lofty. Thence it seemed to me
 That the consummate sweetness of Bianca
 Was not ill qualified to mitigate
 Thy perilous impetuosity.
 At length thou wert a father; and art still so,
 As I am, to my sorrow. Ah! that I
 Had never been so! Then at once with her,
 And for her, had my country seen me die.

Raimondo—And daredst thou make me a father, where
 To be a father is to be a slave?

Guglielmo—Ah, then, at least, our servitude was
 doubtful.

Raimondo—Our infamy indeed was less confirmed.

Guglielmo—'Tis true; I hoped, since to our common
 wrongs,

All remedies were fruitless and too late,
 That thou mightst pass thy days in quietness,
 Blest in a father's and a husband's feelings.

Raimondo—But, e'en though I were sprung from other blood,

Can any being tranquilly enjoy
Domestic transports in a place like this?
I was not, no, assuredly, to these
Vain trappings of vain magistracy born,
Which make him seem the first who is the last.
For this perchance the tyrants have to-day
Essayed to take them from me: trappings these,
So much the more disgraceful, as they are
The cloak of simulated liberty.
'Twas infamous to invest me with them; now
'Twill be as infamous to rob me of them:
Oh, cursed destiny!

Guglielmo—Report of this
Is spread; it even reached my ears; but I
Cannot believe it, no.

Raimondo—Why not believe it?
Have not they shown us more offensive insults?
Possessions seized, dost thou no more remember,
Our statutes changed, alone to aim at us?
Since we ignobly made ourselves their kinsmen,
We've always been more exquisitely injured.

Guglielmo—Hear me, O son, and to my hoary age,
My long experience, trust. The just disdain
Which in the deep recesses of my heart
I also cherish, with rash impotence
Exhaust not thou: we yet awhile may bear.
I ne'er can think that they would take from thee
A dignity conferred, whate'er it be.
But yet, should they all bounds of sufferance pass,
Be silent thou: full oft revengeful words
Defeat revengeful deeds. A lofty silence
Is the precursor of a lofty vengeance.
The courteous carriage of the tyrants toward us
Gives thee a precedent for valid hate.

Meanwhile, O son, I would alone exhort,
And teach thee, to endure. Nor afterward
Shall I disdain, if one day it be needful,
To learn from thee how to direct the blow. [Exit.

Scene Second

Raimondo—I dare not trust in him. Let Salviati
First to these shores return. My father
Discovers nothing of my purposes:
He knows not that to-day it pleases me
Rather to annoy than court these tyrants.
Ah, father! wouldst thou fain now be to me
A master of endurance? Art thou he,
Than whom thy country formerly had not
A more intrepid champion? How propense,
Gelid old age, art thou to servitude!
Ah! if nought else by length of years is learned,
But how to tremble, to obey, endure,
In silence to endure, rather than learn
Such abject arts, I choose the bitterest death.

Scene Third

BIANCA, RAIMONDO.

Bianca—Consort, at last I find thee. Ah, with whom
Wouldst thou be, if thou fliest e'en from me?

Raimondo—Here, with my father, I at length con-
versed

A short time since: but I have not thence gained
Alleviation to my wrongs.

Bianca—He is,
Though good in all things else, the best of fathers:
He fears not for himself; but all his fears
Are for his children roused. The generous old man
Smothers, for us, the anger in his breast.

Believe not, no, that valor is exhausted,
Or intrepidity in him subdued:
Ah! suffer then that I repeat it to thee:
He is the best of fathers.

Raimondo—Oh! perchance,
Thou wouldst insinuate that I'm not like him?
Thou knowst if nothing else availed, thy prayers
Were ever potent to restrain my wrath;
Thy prayers alone, Bianca, thy chaste love,
And thy maternal tears. I esteemed thee
Companion sweet, not sister of my foes.
But, does it seem to thee, to-day, that still
I ought to hold my peace? To-day, decreed
To see my forfeiture without pretext
Of this my popular dignity? When we
Are doomed as fugitives to quit this dwelling,
Asylum sacred once to public freedom?

Bianca—Powerful they are; what boots it, then, with
words

To exasperate those who answer not, and act?
Thy silence, better far than menaces,
Might now appease them.

Raimondo—And should I appease them?
But to appease them nothing now avails.

Bianca—Nothing? Of one blood am not I with them?

Raimondo—I know it; and I grieve for it; be silent;
Recall it not to mind.

Bianca—And why? For this,
Art thou, or hast thou been, less dear to me?
Am not I ready, if to endure their sway
Is irksome to thee, wheresoe'er thou wilt
To follow thee? or if thy haughty soul
Scorned not to have in me a means of peace,
Am I less ready for thyself to speak,
To weep, to pray, and even, if I ought,
By dint of force to make my brothers yield?

Raimondo—To pray for me? and whom to pray to?
tyrants?

Canst thou intend it, lady? and canst thou
Expect that I permit it?

Bianca—Riches, power,
Arms, partisans, hast thou, whence openly
Thou canst make head against them?

Raimondo—In my breast
A hate I cherish, equal to their hate;
Courage superior far.

Bianca—Alas! what say'st thou?
Wouldst thou perchance attempt—Ah! thou mayst lose
Father, and consort, children, honor, life.
And what canst thou acquire? Within thy heart
The flattering expectation cherish not:
No genuine wish in this vile people lives
For pristine austere liberty; from me
Trust this assertion. Trust to me. I, born
And in the lap of nascent tyranny
Brought up, all its dependencies I know.
Tools thou wilt find by thousands and by thousands,
In their discourse ferocious, in their deeds
Contemptible, in time of danger nothing,
Or skilful only in betraying thee.
I am not so unnatural and cruel
That I abhor my brothers; yet far less
Have they been loved by me, since I have seen
Their arrogance toward thee; that arrogance
Galls my afflicted spirit. If I am
Compelled by thee to make the fatal choice
'Twixt thee and them, by thee I am a mother,
Thy wife am I, thou art oppressed. I cannot,
Nor ought I, hesitate. But thou, awhile,
Do thou resolve on nothing: the enterprise
To make thee, if not happy, safe at least,
Leave it to me; let me at least attempt it.

Or do I not perchance yet fully know
How I, the consort of a citizen,
Ought to address a tyrant? Yet perchance
Do I not know how far I may unite
To not invalid reasons, lofty prayers?
Mother, wife, sister, am I not? In whom
If not in me, canst thou confide?

Raimondo—Oh, heaven!

Lady, thy words afflict me. Peace would I
Also obtain; but not with infamy.
What to thy brothers couldst thou say for me?
That I deserve not insult? Well they know it;
Hence they insult me: that I brook not wrongs?
Why make that known which only from my lips
They ought to know?

Bianca—Ah!...if to them thou speakest—Alas!

Raimondo—What fear'st thou? True it is, that I
Can never change my soul: but, if I will,
I can be silent. Thou, beloved Bianca,
Thou and my sons are always in my thoughts.
Impetuous, intolerant, audacious,
If I was born, yet not on this account
Do I let slip a word by accident.
Compose thyself; I also wish for peace.

Bianca—Yet from thy countenance do I infer
Thy heart is shaken by a frightful storm.
In thee I see no forerunners of peace.

Raimondo—I am not joyful; but in me suspect not
Cruel designs.

Bianca—I fear; yet know not why.

Raimondo—Because thou lovest me.

Bianca—Oh, heaven! and with
What love!...Ah! that the path to certain fame
Were opened to thee now!...But we are doom'd
To drag out life in a corrupted age.
Submission is our glory; and self-love

Our only virtue. What wouldst thou effect?

One man can not regenerate a people,
And coadjutors here thou wilt not find.

Raimondo—Hence I pine inwardly, and hence am
silent.

Bianca—Ah, come, and let us elsewhere turn our steps:
My brothers sometimes place their judgment-seat
In these apartments.

Raimondo—This is the retreat,
I know, in which to lying praise their ears
They open, and their bosoms close to pity.

Bianca—Come then with me; and mingle with the
poison

That subtly creeps through every throbbing vein,
Some soothing balsam. Thou hast not to-day
Embraced our children yet. Ah, come, I pray thee!
And with their innocent and silent kisses
Let them, far better than I can with words,
Remind thee that thou art a father still.

Raimondo—Ah, could I, as to-day I recollect
The name of father, that of man forget!
But, let us now depart.—Thou shalt have proof
Whether my children are beloved by me.
Ah, thou knowest not (and mayest thou never know)
To what extremities his children drive
A real father; how he may be goaded
To their destruction by o'erweening fondness.

ACT II

Scene First

GIULIANO and LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

Lorenzo—Brother, what boots it? Thou hast hitherto
Trusted to me: does it now seem to thee
That, by my means, our influence is diminished?
Thou talkest of restraining men? are these
Restrained? If such had met with tolerance,
Say, had we risen to our present greatness?

Giuliano—'Tis true, Lorenzo, a benignant star
Has always shone on us. We owe in part
To fortune our advancement; but still more
To our forefathers' lofty counsels owe it.
Cosimo possessed the state, but he possessed it
Under the semblance of a private man.
Nor are the fetters yet so riveted,
That with the exterior of royalty
We may securely grasp them. Let us leave
To fools, who form the multitude, the vain
Appearances of their lost liberty.
In its beginning, arbitrary power,
The less it is displayed, is more confirmed.

Lorenzo—We have not yet obtained the height of
greatness:
We are summoned by the present times, O Giuliano
Rather to greatly dare, than nicely weigh.
Cosimo already centered in himself
His universal country; and by all,
As with one voice, was welcomed as a father.
Little or nothing to the complex scheme
Pier, our father, added: adverse fate
Quickly cut short the few and feeble days
That he survived his sire: he added little.
But meanwhile, he to Cosimo succeeding,

And we to Pier, something is obtained
 In thus accustoming the citizens
 To hereditary right. Our foes thenceforward
 Have been each day dispersed, enfeebled, slain;
 Our friends accustomed or constrained to obey:
 Now that all things invite us to complete
 Cosimo's generous enterprise, shall we
 Be self-defeated by our cowardice?

Giuliano—Wisely we ought to bring it to an end;
 But in a manner moderate and humane.
 Where gentle measures may effect our ends
 With cautious speed, inflexible, yet mild;
 And, when 'tis needful, sparingly severe.
 Brother, believe me, to eradicate
 Those seeds of liberty, by nature placed
 In every human breast, no little art
 And management, besides a length of time,
 Are requisite: these seeds may be suppressed
 By spilling human blood, but not extinguished.
 And oftentimes from blood they shoot again
 With fresh luxuriance.

Lorenzo—And do I wish
 To shed the blood of these? The ax in Rome
 Was Scylla's instrument; but e'en the rod
 Is too imposing here: my words alone
 Suffice to make them tremble.

Giuliano—Blind reliance!
 Knowest thou not that none are to be feared
 Like men enslaved? Scylla dismissed his guards,
 Yet hence was he not slain; but girt with arms,
 With satellites, and mercenary spies,
 Nero, Domitian, and Caligula,
 And thousand others that have ruled o'er slaves,
 By their own minions butchered, fell ignobly.
 Why vex those who serve us well already?
 Obtain thy end by other means. 'Tis true,

The people here were never wholly free;
But notwithstanding never slaves to one.
Thou shouldst benumb their minds; and utterly
Enervate their affections; each high thought
Subtly eradicate; abolish virtue,
Or wither it by making it a jest;
Install among thy creatures the most pliant;
Degrade, by honoring them, the falsely proud;
Declaim in lofty and imposing tones
Of clemency, of country, glory, laws,
And citizens; and more than aught besides
Affect equality with thy inferiors.
Behold the mighty means, by which in each
Are changed, by little and by little, first
The feelings, then the customs, thence the laws;
Then the deportment of the ruler; last,
That which alone remains to change, his name.

Lorenzo—Our ancestors with happy auspices
Adopted all these measures long ago.
The foolish quarrels of the citizens,
If now a link is wanting to the chain,
Should fabricate that link. One, only one,
Dares openly, in short, to brave our power;
And ought he to be feared?

Giuliano—Ferocious son
Of disaffected father, Raimondo
Gives ground for apprehension.

Lorenzo—Both should be,
(And to this project I address myself)
Blasted by scorn: e'en a revenge like that
Would not be undelightful.

Giuliano—'Tis not safe.

Lorenzo—Great as the project is, my mind is fixed.
I from his rank will take that youth;
And suffer him to scatter at his will
Seditious words in vain: thus all shall see

How thoroughly I scorn his menaces.

Giuliano—A foe offended, and not slain? At this,
What bosom, e'en though mailed with triple steel,
Would tremble not? Shouldst thou make him a foe
Whom thou couldst extirpate? Why thus give him,
Thyself, incautiously, so many pretexts
To agitate the state? Why make him thus
The head and leader of the malcontents?
And they are numerous; many, many more
Than thou suspectest. Open force they have not?
I trust that it is so; but who will guard
Our back from treason? Will suspicion, say,
Suffice for this? It may suffice to spoil
Our quiet, not to give security.

Lorenzo—Audacity will be our best defense:
Audacity to the enterprising breast
Which is both sword, and intellect, and shield.
A silent invitation I will give
To the rebellious and impetuous youth
To new offences. Afterward disgraced,
But not destroyed, by him who might destroy him,
He to the multitude whom now he heads
Will thus become an object of derision.

Scene Second

LORENZO, GIULIANO, GUGLIELMO, RAIMONDO.

Guglielmo—Follow my footsteps, son; and I beseech
thee

Suffer me here to speak alone.—Oh, you—
(For yet I know not by what epithet
I should accost you) in a suppliant posture
Behold me here your once implacable
And bitterest enemy. Better I know,
Better adapted to my age infirm,

Were free expressions, and still freer deeds;
Nor with my nature, though I use them, do
These servile ones accord. But I am not
The only one remaining of my house;
Whence to your fortune, and to tyrannous
And base necessity, I long have yielded.
Myself, my life, my substance, and my honor,
My children, all did I confide to you;
Nor was I more reluctant to obey
Than others were. Thence can I scarce believe
That which is now reported, that ye mean
With undeserved wrongs to harm Raimondo,
And me in him. But grant, if this be true,
That I demand of you the cause for this.

Giuliano—Why from thy son dost thou not first demand

The cause of his deportment, and his language?

Raimondo—I refuse not to give account to him;
Nor can I ever meet with those to whom
I would more freely, than to you, confess
My purposes.

Lorenzo—Thy purposes I know.
But I would teach thee that if thou wouldst cope
With those in power, there's need of enterprise
Proportioned to thy envy; and not less
Strength to that lofty enterprise proportioned.
Say, fares it so with thee?

Guglielmo—I hitherto
Was chief of all our race; nor is there one
Who dares to move if I precede him not.
I speak of deeds. And what, do ye likewise
Pretend to sit in judgment on our thoughts?
Are ineffectual words high treason here?
Are we so far advanced?—If ye pretend
To exercise a right like this, I ask you—
That men may learn more abjectly to fear—

What are you? Whence your charter to such power?

Raimondo—What are they? Dost thou ask it? Do
not they

Tremendously, though tacitly, express it

In their imperious and cruel faces?—

Yes, they are all; and nothing we.

Giuliano—We are

The fearless guardians of the sacred laws;

We are exterminating flames from heaven

To culprits like thyself; but, to the good,

Heart-cheering benefactors.

Lorenzo—In one word

Such are we as to hold thee in contempt.

Our will to thee assigned the gonfalon,

Another will of ours, more just, recalls it.

With dignity, unmerited by us,

Invested, *didst thou ask on what pretence*

The gonfalon was yielded to thy hands?

Raimondo—Who knows it not? Your terror gave it
me;

Your terror takes it from me: to yourselves

Terror is law supreme and deity.

What attribute of kings possess you not?

Already ye possess the public hate,

Their cruel artifice, their frantic vices,

Their infamous contrivances. Ye tread

The generous path trod by your ancestors.

Proceed, O valiant, in full sail proceed,

While friendly gales attend you. Not wealth alone,

But life and honor ye will take away

From those who give you umbrage; the sublime,

And only right to your authority,

From waste of blood arises. Greatly dare:

And try to imitate the many tyrants

By whom oppressed Italia has been scourged.

Guglielmo—My son, thou dost exceed all bounds. 'Tis true,

That it is lawful for each man to speak
His thoughts, while these have not thrown off the name
Of citizens: but we—

Lorenzo—Too late thou'rt cautious:
Thy time has thou ill chosen to restrain him.
Fret not thyself; his words are thy begetting.
Leave him to speak; on us depends to hear him.

Giuliano—Audacious youth, minds ill-disposed already,
What boots it to exasperate? 'Twould be
The best for thee spontaneously to quit
The gonfalon, which in contempt of us
Thou wouldst retain in vain; thou seest it.

Raimondo—Shall I thus make myself deserving insults?

Hear me: these arts successfully perchance
May be adopted to insure command,
But not obedience. If I yield,
I yield alone to force. Honor sometimes
Is by submission gained, if we indeed
Submit to nothing but to absolute
And dire necessity.—It pleases me,
As I have told you mine, to hear your thoughts.
Now new means to new violence I wait
To see, and be they what they may, I swear
That I will be of rising tyranny
The victim, yes, but not the instrument. [Exit.

Scene Third

LORENZO, GIULIANO, GUGLIELMO.

Lorenzo—Go; if thou lov'st thy son, pursue him:
To form his conduct better to the times
Instruct him; and to this do thou thyself,

By thy example, aid him. Equally
 With him indeed thou hatest us, yet thou
 Hast yielded to us, and dost yield. Engraft
 Thy own discretion on his headstrong will.
 I do not e'en pretend regard for you;
 I'll have ye feigned; and nothing it annoys me.
 Haste, but obey; and yet, obeying, tremble.
 Go thou, and tell to this thy mountebank,
 And pigmy Brutus, that his prototype,
 The real Brutus, fell in vain with Rome.

Guglielmo—I see my son's incautious. Yet alway
 I gave to him a father's wise reproofs;
 I preach endurance, but he learns it not.
 This is an art to which we've not been used:
 Failings of youth are worthy of excuse;
 He will amend.—But thou, O Giuliano,
 Who art with honors and prosperity
 Somewhat less drunken, thy brother soften,
 And make him recollect that if a Brutus
 Failed to regenerate Rome, yet many others
 Were sacrificed ere Rome and Brutus fell.

[Exit.]

Scene Fourth

LORENZO, GIULIANO.

Giuliano—Heardst thou how these address us?

Lorenzo—Yes, I heard.

They're garrulous, and thence I fear them less.

Giuliano—One may hatch plots—

Lorenzo—But few will follow him.

Giuliano—Raimondo may be that one.

Lorenzo—That he may be

That one, is what I hope. I fully know

His courage, his resources, and his force:

He may attempt, but he will ne'er succeed.

What can I wish for more? I look to him,
Hoping that he our mandate may transgress.
Let him attempt it; we at once shall thwart him.
Each hostile enterprise confirms our power,
And to our just revenge at once prepares
An ample field for action. In calm seas
Progress is difficult; the earliest storm
Will drive our vessel to the wished-for port.

Giuliano—To wish for all at once, often at once
Causes the loss of all. All danger's doubtful;
Nor he who fills the throne should e'er permit
Even the thought to cross his subjects' minds
That he's assailable by other men.
The opinion of the multitude, which holds
Our breasts invulnerable, is in itself
The very panoply that makes them so.
Woe if we leave the passage to our hearts
Once obvious to the point of trait'rous swords!
A day will come when it will penetrate,
And find a passage to the very hilt.
To-day, O brother, yield thyself to me;
No, our authority put not to proof,
Or their revenge. Ah, yield thyself to me.

Lorenzo—To reason I am always wont to yield,
And this I hope to prove to thee.—But see,
Bianca comes to us o'erwhelm'd with grief:
How painful is it to my soul to hear
Her lamentations! yet I'm forced to hear them.

Scene Fifth

BIANCA, LORENZO, GIULIANO.

Bianca—And is it true, O brothers, 'tis your will
To show yourselves to me oppressive lords,
Rather than brothers? Yet, if I to you

Was ever dear, I am your sister still;
And ye to Raimondo gave me; ye who now
Art thus first to insult him.

Lorenzo—Art thou thus
Become, Bianca, hostile to thy blood,
That thou no more discernest equity?
Hast thou with Raimondo learned to hate us,
So that our hearts are known to thee no longer?
All that we wish to do is to defeat
His malice by our measures. Gentle means,
Far gentler than he merits, we adopt,
To obviate further mischief: be convinced.

Bianca—Brothers, dear to me are ye; he to me
Is also dear: I would do all for peace.
But why, if he already was your foe,
Give me to him in marriage? If ye gave
Me to him, why insult him afterward?

Giuliano—We hoped that thou at least wouldst be a
check
To his temerity—

Lorenzo—But hoped in vain:
For such is Raimondo that 'twere easier far
To exterminate than change him.

Bianca—But have you
Ever toward him the manners used that change
A free, unconquered heart? If it grieves you
Not to be loved by him, who, save yourselves,
Prohibits his affection?

Lorenzo—Oh, my sister,
How has the traitor utterly transfused
His poison in thy heart? He hath estranged
Thee, thee our sister, from all duteous thoughts;
Guess then how banefully his hostile words
Will operate elsewhere.

Bianca—I might behold
With some complacency your sovereign power,

If one man I beheld, one, only one,
From your ferocious tyranny exempt;
And if that one were Raimondo; he to whom,
By an indissoluble, sacred tie,
Ye have united me; with whom I live
Inseparably joined for many years,
With whom participate, with whom endure
A thousand injuries; to whom, alas!
Pledges of faith and of eternal love
(A wretched mother!) I have given already
Too numerous and too dear a progeny;—
Raimondo, to whom I'm ready to yield all.

Giuliano—To take from him his office is to wrest
The power of self-destruction from his hands,
Rather than that of injury to ourselves.
Indeed to be the first, it now becomes thee,
To induce him to renounce it.

Bianca—Ah! I see,
I manifestly see, by different means,
How to one end ye hasten. Of your views
I was the earliest victim; I was not
To real peace, but to delayed revenge,
A sacrifice. Oh, well ye understood
To assume at once the hearts and power of kings!
'Mid those resembling you, all natural ties
Are treated with derision. Wretched me!
Why had I not discovered this before?
Why knew it not before I was a mother?
But such I am; a mother and a wife.

Lorenzo—I cannot blame thy grief; but longer now
I cannot bear it.—Brother, let us go
Whither our duty summons us.—And thou,
Who deem'st us tyrants in thy heart, think not
Of that which he has lost, but rather think
Of that which, nothing meriting, he keeps.

[Exeunt.]

Scene Sixth

BIANCA.

Bianca—Thus sufferance to retain, kings deem a gift!
 With these my tears are vain: their hearts are mailed
 In adamant. Let me return once more
 To sad Raimondo: he at least beholds
 My tears without contempt. Who knows? Perchance
 My griefs may thus be lightened. Why perchance?
 Can there be doubt of this? We should behold
 Each father promptly, for his children's sake,
 Resign his life, ere that a single prince
 Would to the tears of all his fellow-men,
 Much less then to a sister's tears, resign
 The paltry prize of one fantastic wish.

ACT III

Scene First

RAIMONDO, SALVIATI.

Salviati—Behold me here: this is the appointed day:
 I come; and bring with me whate'er I promised.
 Already to the borders of Etruria
 Warriors advance in arms: King Ferdinand
 Pays them; the Roman Sixtus blesses them;
 Ere they proceed, they wait to hear from us
 The signal of attack. Now say, hast thou
 All promised ammunition in these walls?

Raimondo—My arm has long been ready for the blow;
 And I have store of others also ready;
 But whom to strike, or where, or how, or when,
 They know not; nor befits it that they know.
 But to the great achievement yet is wanting

Its chiefest ornament: my aged father,
He who alone could authorize the attempt,
Is ignorant of it: to revengeful words
His ears are closed; and thou wilt hear him speak
Of sufferance yet. My thoughts are known to him;
For ill I hide them; further he knows nothing.
I deem'd it wisest to conceal from him
This our conspiracy till thou cam'st here.

Salviati—What say'st thou? Nothing 'Guglielmo
knows?

And thinkest thou that, at the close of day,
He should be ignorant of what he's doomed
To-morrow to accomplish?

Raimondo—Thinkest thou
That it were wise to risk so great a secret?
That to a man (though enterprising once)
Infirm from years, 'twere wise to grant one night
To after-thoughts? Beyond a few brief hours
Audacity dwells not in empty veins;
Prudence comes soon; irresolution thence,
Procrastination and inconstancy,
And the infecting others with alarm;
And 'midst these doubts and fears the enterprise,
The time for its completion, and the rage
Insuring its success, dissolve away,
And guilty shame at last o'erwhelms the whole.

Salviati—But say, detests he not the dreadful yoke?
And shares he not the general indignation?

Raimondo—He hates it, but he fears more than he
hates;

And thence he vacillates eternally
'Twixt anger and dismay. Now he controls
His wholesome indigestion, and he prays
And waits for, and half hopes for, better times;
And now, as by a fatal flash revealed,
The truth at once on his bewildered mind

Bursts forth; and all the heaviness he feels
 Of his unworthy chains, yet dares not burst them.
 He was indeed incensed beyond all bounds
 At the last outrage, which I would incur
 At all events. The useless gonfalon
 Let others gain, taken from me to-day.
 I have, with many and repeated insults,
 Myself compelled the tyrants to resume
 The honor they bestowed. Yet not the less
 For this have I indulged in loud complaints,
 Affecting an immeasurable grief
 For the invited injury.—Oh, see
 What times we live in, what abode is ours,
 When with hypocrisy we're forced to clothe
 E'en patriotic views!—By schemes like these
 I have, at least in part, to my designs
 Silently moulded Guglielmo's heart.
 At length thou comest: thou shalt now divulge
 The King's assistance, the pontific wrath,
 The means concerted. Let us wait him here;
 For here we are accustomed to confer.

Salviati—Do not the tyrants oftentimes repair
 To these apartments?

Raimondo—We are now secure
 From their approach: already has this place
 Witnessed their public and obnoxious toils.
 The remnant of the day, which we consume,
 We, the scorned multitude, in useless tears,
 They spend in revels and in sensual joys.
 Hence I invited thee to meet me here;
 And hence my father also summoned. He,
 At first, will be amazed at seeing thee:
 In a short time I will reveal to him
 The indignation and the hardihood,
 And the immutable and stern resolve
 Of giving death, or dying, which we feel.

Mine be the task to inflame him. But, meanwhile,
Let him at once learn this confederacy
Both can be formed and is already formed.

Salviati—Thou dost admonish wisely: more and more
I deem thee, as I listen to thy words,
A worthy instrument of liberty.
As there are born oppressors, so art thou
Defender of thy country. To induce
Thy father to concur in our designs,
The sanction of the Pope will much avail.
Those early principles on aged hearts
Have mighty influence, which e'en with our milk
We once imbibed. Rome, evermore believed
Implicitly by our forefathers, named
Each enterprise, injurious to herself,
Impious; and those, whatever they might be,
Holy, that aided her ambitious views.
If we are wise, this ancient prejudice
May now avail us much: since at this time,
Not as he's wont to be, the successor
Of Peter is the enemy of tyrants,
At this time, more than all allies beside,
That successor of Peter may befriend us.

Raimondo—It grieves me, I to thee alone confess it,
It grieves me not a little, thus to make
Vile means subservient to a generous end.
To raise as watchword in the cause of freedom,
The name of Rome, the abode of guilty slaves:
Here are the times, and not myself, in fault!
And further am I grieved, that I'm constrained
To make pretext of individual wrongs
In this most righteous cause. The multitude
Will think that I'm inflamed by low revenge
And selfish passions; and perchance believe
That I am envious of the tyrant's power.—
Oh, heaven, thou knowest.

Salviati—Let not thoughts like these
Divert thee from thy purpose: speedily
The foolish vulgar will be undeceived
By our performances.

Raimondo—The time to come
Fills me with mournful and foreboding thoughts.
Their necks they have accustomed to the yoke;
Their natural rights forgotten; they know not
That they're in chains, much less desire to burst them.
Slavery, the natures who resist it not,
Transforms, embrates; and rather needs their force
To give them freedom than to clench their fetters.

Salviati—Hence will the enterprise be more exalted,
And worthier of thyself. In Greece or Rome
'Twas meritorious, though not difficult,
To endow free souls with freedom. But to rouse
Dead and degraded slaves to life at once,
And liberty, ah, this indeed requires
Stern devotion.

Raimondo—It is true, yet fame
Awaits the mere attempt. Ah, were I sure
As of my own arm, and of my own heart,
Of those of my compatriots! But by slaves.
The tyrant, not the tyranny, is hated.

Scene Second

GUGLIELMO, SALVIATI, RAIMONDO.

Guglielmo—Thou, Salviati, here? I thought thou wert
Pursuing honors on the Tiber's banks.

Salviati—A mightier object to my natal soil
Restores me.

Guglielmo—Lucklessly dost thou review
A soil which it were better to forget.
To us what foolish purposes guide thee safe,

Far from the tyrants didst thou dwell, and thou
Returnest to thy prison. To the man
Doomed to behold his native land enslaved
By cruel and by arbitrary power,
What unfrequented and what distant spot
(However savage and inhospitable)
Can be unwelcome? Let my son to thee
Be an example, if we ought to look
From these our Medicæan lords for aught
But outrages and scorn. In vain, in vain
Rome with the sacred ministry invests thee;
Their supreme will alone is here held sacred.

Raimondo—Father, and know'st thou whether he
comes here

Armed with endurance or a shield less vile?

Salviati—Of bitter and retributory wrath
I come the austere minister: I come
Of plenary, inflexible revenge,
Though late, the certain messenger. I hope
To arouse ye all from the vile lethargy
In which ye all lie buried, abject slaves,
Now that with me and with my rage I bring
The holy rage of Sixtus, sovereign Pontiff.

Guglielmo—Arms wholly useless: rage we do not
want;

We want support; endurance or support
Must be our choice or chance.

Salviati—Support we bring,
And more effectual than was ever proffered.
I bring not words alone. Hear, for to me,
In brief yet powerful language, it belongs
The business to divulge. There are, by whom
I am commissioned to recall to thee,
Provided thou canst yet remember them,
The ancient times, and thy original pride.
If not, the painful duty then is mine

The degradation of thyself and others
 To bring before thine eyes. If in thy veins
 There yet is blood left to revolt at this,
 Assistance is not far from us. Already
 The Roman banners in the Etrurian ports
 Wave to the wind; and far more firm support
 The standard of King Ferdinand affords,
 Followed by thousand swords in firm array,
 Impatient for the fight, at one slight nod
 Of thine for any enterprise prepared.
 In thy arbitrament is placed the life
 Of the oppressors; thine and thy son's honor;
 The freedom of us all. That which thy sword
 May yet obtain, that which thou yet may'st lose
 From cowardice, thy doubts, thy hopes, thy fears,
 Our loss and our disgrace maturely weigh,
 And finally resolve.

Guglielmo—What do I hear?
 To thee can I yield credence? Who obtained
 So much for our advantage? Hitherto
 Profuse alone in empty promises
 Sixtus and Ferdinand were tardy friends.
 Who now impels them, who?

Raimondo—Dost thou ask that?
 Hast thou so soon forgotten then that I
 Repaired to Naples and the Tiber's banks?
 That there twelve months I tarried? To what clime
 Can I transport myself, and not inspire,
 Where'er I go, resentment and abhorrence?
 Among what people can I drag my days,
 Into whose bosoms I shall not transfuse
 All, all my indignation, and at once
 Excite in them compassion for myself
 And for my friends? Who now remains
 Deaf to my lamentations?—For our shame
 Thou are alone so, father; where thou ought'st,

More than all others, to abhor the yoke,
And feel its weight: thou, whom I call my father,
Art equally with me the tyrants' foe;
And art by them, e'en more than I am, scorned.
Thou, once the best among good citizens,
For thy too facile criminal endurance
Art now among the guilty ones the worst.
Ah, make with thy infirm refusal, make
Our fetters and thy infamy eternal!
All now perceive that we are fit to serve,
But not to live: yes, wait, wait on for time,
Till time is ours no more: those hoary locks
For fresh disgraces keep; and palliate
With false compassion for thy son, which he
With all his heart abhors and disavows,
Thy ignominious cowardice.

Guglielmo—My son,
For such indeed thou art, no less than thou,
Fervid with youth and generous vehemence,
I once thus thundered; but that time is past;
E'en now I am not vile, nor deem'st thou so
Who thus aspersest me; but I have ceased
To act by chance.

Raimondo—Thou art resigned to live
Each day by chance, and wilt not act by chance?
What art thou? What are we? Would not the hope,
The most precarious, of revenge, now be
A state more certain than the doubtful one,
The apprehensive one, in which we're doom'd,
Trembling, to live?

Guglielmo—Thou know'st that for myself I tremble
not.

Raimondo—Then wouldst thou say for me,
I absolve thee from all paternal care
On my account. We both are citizens,
And nothing else to-day; and there remains

Far more for me than for thyself to lose.
 To the meridian of my days have I
 Scarcely attained; and thou toward night declinest.
 Children thou hast; like thee, I am a father;
 I have an offspring but too numerous,
 And of that helpless age that they are fit
 Only to wake compassion in my heart.
 Different, far different, are my ties from thine.
 I see a lovely consort, of myself
 The better part, eternally in tears
 Beside me pining: when they see her weep,
 My children flock around, and ask her why;
 And they too weep with her. Their sorrows rend
 My heart; and I'm constrained to weep by stealth.
 But soon the sad remembrance disenchant
 Each soft affection of my withered heart,
 That 'tis not fitting for a slave to love
 Objects not his. My consort is not mine,
 My children are not mine, while I permit
 Him, whosoe'er he be, that is a tyrant,
 In this place to inhale the vital air.
 I have no tie now left in all the world
 Except the stern inexorable oath,
 Tyrants and tyranny to extirpate.

Guglielmo—Wouldst thou slay two of them: to willing
 slaves

Will tyrants e'er be wanting?

Raimondo—To the free

Will swords be wanting? Let them rise by thousands,
 By thousands they shall fall, or I will fall.

Guglielmo—I am subdued by thy decisive will.

I, not unworthy of a son like thee,
 Would to thy noble rage commit myself,
 If of our arms, and not of foreign powers,
 Thou wouldst avail thyself. I see not, no,
 For our sakes, Rome and Ferdinand in arms;

But for the injury of the Medici.
We place them in these walls ourselves, but who
At will can chase them afterward from thence?
The mercenary soldiers of a king
Seem not to me the harbingers of freedom.

Salviati—I thus reply to thee. The faith of Rome,
The faith of Ferdinand I warrant not:
It is the accustomed plan of those who reign
Alternately to give it or resume it.
In the suspicion common to them both,
Their mutual envy, and in what is called
State policy, do thou to-day confide.
Both fain would domineer o'er us; but one
Prevents the other. Pity for our state
Their heart conceives not, nor have I alleged it;
But long experience, to our shame, persuades them
That popular and fluctuating rule,
The turbulence of faction, render us
Slow to resolve, irresolute in act.
Each of them fears that, on the Tuscan ruins,
A single Tuscan chieftain should arise,
Who may suffice to annihilate the one,
If with the other leagued. Behold at once
The royal knot untwisted: private ends
Prompt both alliances. If otherwise,
Think'st thou that I should ever dare to urge
Reliance on the friendship of a king?

Raimondo—And were it otherwise, dost thou believe
That I should inconsiderately relax
The reins that I, with persevering hand,
O'er the reboundings of my struggling will,
Have held so many years? I uttered not
By accident inflammatory words
To thee; by accident thou didst not hear me
Exasperate with pungent virulence
The tyrant's rage against me. Long I spake not,

While silence might assist me; but the proud,
 Imprudent tauntings that have maddened them
 To injure me, by prudence were inspired.
 To my vile fellow-slaves I had in vain
 Our general wrongs adduced; for private ones
 Alone establish in corrupted minds
 Right to retaliation. I could find
 Abettors of my vengeance, if alone
 I of myself discoursed; but not one man
 Could I e'er find discoursing of my country.
 Hence (ah, opprobrious and cruel silence,
 But indispensable!) I never dared
 To name my country, never. But to thee,
 Who art not of the common herd of men,
 Can I refrain from naming her? Ah, no!
 The object of our enterprise consists
 In slaying the two tyrants: but 'twill be
 Of far more difficult accomplishment
 To fashion after consequences well;
 To give to inanition life once more;
 To re-create our prostrate commonwealth,
 To make it once more strong, and capable
 Of liberty; to make its pulses beat,
 Now languishing, with vigorous, virtuous health.
 Now, say'st thou not that we're confederate
 To a most holy purpose? I alone
 Am leader of this lofty brotherhood;
 He is but one, as thou may'st also be,
 Of its component parts. We have, thou seest,
 Great instruments; and courage greater still:
 Sublime the end, and worthy of ourselves.
 Thou, father, from a project great as this,
 Wilt thou shrink back disheartened? Thy consent
 Grant me, oh, grant me; nothing else is wanting.
 The swords unscabbarded are raised already.
 Give, give the signal only, and thou seest them

In their devoted bosoms plunged at once,
And make an ample space for liberty.

Guglielmo—Thou hast a hero's mind.—A noble shame,
Astonishment, resentment, hope, and rage,
All hast thou raised in me. Sense of old age,
Courage of manhood, and the fire of youth,
What has thou not? My guide and my commander,
My deity art thou.—It shall be thine
Alone, the honor of this enterprise;
With thee, its dangers only will I share!
Thou say'st, that naught is wanting but my name
To accomplish it. Henceforth to thy will
That name, and all its influence, I yield:
Dispose, elect, and whomsoe'er thou wilt
Rescind from our confederates. Keep alone
A weapon for thy father: thou shalt teach me
What post I should fill up, what blow inflict,
The whole shalt teach me, when the whole is ready:
In thee and thy judicious rage I trust.

Raimondo—But, more than thou may'st think, that
time draws near.
Thou wilt not be inconstant?

Guglielmo—I am thy father:
Dost thou expect to change?

Raimondo—Then whet thy blade,
For at the dawn of day—But who approaches?
Bianca! Oh, my friend, let us avoid her.
The last directions to this mighty work
Haste we to give. To thee I shall return,
Father, ere long, and then thou shalt know all.

[Exeunt.]

Scene Third

GUGLIELMO, BIANCA.

Bianca—I seek for Raimondo, and he flies from me.
Oh, tell me wherefore, and with whom he flies!

What do I see? Thou seem'st bereft of reason!
 What troublous thoughts estrange thee from thyself?
 Ah, speak: does any danger threaten us?
 O'er whom does it impend?

Guglielmo—If agony
 Sits heavily upon my pallid face,
 Why shouldst thou be surprised at this? I fear
 And cannot hide my fears; and who fears not?
 If thou look'st round, a pallidness like mine
 On every face is painted.

Bianca—But for fear
 What fresh occasion?

Guglielmo—'Tis not fresh, O daughter.

Bianca—But I have always seen thee hitherto
 Immovable: thou fearest now, and say'st it.
 And Raimondo, who like an impetuous storm
 Of violent discordant impulses
 Seemed hitherto to me, I now behold
 Assume the semblance of a tranquil man.
 Not long ago, words breathing nought but peace
 He spake to me: and he, of all suspense
 The instinctive enemy, professes now
 To expect alleviation from delay:
 With one unknown he flies from me; and thou
 Stay'st agitated here. Ah, yes, there is
 Too certainly a secret; and thou hid'st it,
 From me thou hid'st it? My spouse, his sire,
 Vie in deluding me. May heaven permit—

Guglielmo—Check these suspicions, check these tears:
 in vain

Should I, alarmed, exhort thee not to fear.
 Fear thou, but fear not us.—Well said my son,
 That time alone can bring us palliatives.
 Go to thy children: thou canst not perform
 A task more grateful to us than to guard them,
 To love them well, and nourish them to virtue.

Useful advice, if thou from me regard it,
'Twill be to thee, that thou shouldst persevere,
Where words avail not, in profoundest silence.
Thus, O Bianca, thou wilt surely win
All our affections; and at once escape
The persecution of thy cruel brothers.

ACT IV

Scene First

GIULIANO, and an armed follower.

Giuliano—Ho; here bring Guglielmo instantly.

Scene Second

GIULIANO.

Giuliano—Does Salviati then return to Florence?
Why should he stir from Rome? How dares he plant
His footsteps in these thresholds? Does he thus
Despise our hatred, and our power, and us?
But yet, if he returns, his hardihood
Springs certainly from force, from borrowed force.
Yes, now 'tis indispensable, to use
All circumspective vigilance is needful;
Which, having once befall'n, we should in vain
For reparation strive. Be Guglielmo
First summoned to our presence; haply he,
Exhausted by the infirmities of age,
May by the bait of flattery be surprised
To indiscreet confession. To these traitors
Since Salviati now has joined himself,
The messenger of papal subtlety,

All circumspective vigilance is needful;
 And with profuse professions we must seek
 A reënforcement of preventive measures,
 And time to adapt them to the exigence.

Scene Third

GUGLIELMO, GIULIANO.

Giuliano—Oh, Guglielmo, thou who dost possess,
 More than all other men, the precious fruit
 Of a long life, and a long life well spent,
 Experience and wisdom; who dost know,
 Dost understand, and canst discriminate
 The modern and the antiquated rights
 Of this our country, listen to my words.
 Already, by the power which now is mine,
 I am not blinded, nor have I consigned
 To iniquitous forgetfulness the name
 Of citizen; I know full well how brief,
 And how unstable are the gifts of fortune.
 I know—

Guglielmo—What thou may'st be who knows? 'Tis
 true,
 Thou dost appear more lenient than thy brother;
 But so corrupted is the vulgar mind,
 That though it fears thee less, it does not hence
 Detest thee less than he. Perchance a tyrant,
 Who forces to obey a race enslaved,
 Is more acceptable than one who stoops
 To dupe them to obedience.

Giuliano—I confess
 Lorenzo oft is culpably incautious;
 Nor is thy Raimondo so invincible
 As he believes himself. Let us confer,
 Softened by more conciliatory thoughts.

Thou knowest that the citizens, informed
And apprehensive of the ancient license,
Committed to our trust the superfluous
Of liberty; from whence the nobler parts
Have since remained eternally untouched.

Guglielmo—How hast thou a plain argument perplexed
With subtle phrases destitute of sense!
There is a simple name for servitude.
Call those who yield to despots slaves at once.

Giuliano—And to thy freedom give the name of license.
I came not for these flimsy arguments.

Guglielmo—'Tis true, that folly only fights in words,

Giuliano—Then listen to me ere I illustrate
This truth with deeds. A fervid virulence
Consumes thy Raimondo's heart: with youth and power
Lorenzo also feels life's pulse beat high.
To thee, thy son, and unto all thy race,
May ruin thence result: but also thence
Our ruin may result by treacherous means.
I speak not of Lorenzo as a brother;
Nor speak thou as a father of thy son.
We're citizens, and thou the best. Now say,
Should we not strenuously exert ourselves
To hinder tumults, bloodshed, and disgrace?
And thou the more so now, as thou art placed
In most alarming danger? Thou who dar'st
Call servitude th' observance of the laws,
Perceivest, that amid new broils, to you
The load will rather be increased than lessened.
Be thou at once a citizen and father:
Make thy son somewhat yield: if he alone
Confess that he is less than we, with this
Lorenzo will be pacified. It is
Allotted to thee with one word of thine
To frustrate each pernicious consequence.

Guglielmo—Who could make Raimonde yield? And
should I,
E'en if I could?

Giuliano—At once confess to me:
If thou wert sovereign here, and thou didst see
Thy power contemned by us, as ours is now
By him, what punishment wouldst thou inflict?
Guglielmo—I should esteem that I in ruling here
So much more grievously insulted others,
That of each insult offered to myself
I should take no account. Of liberty,
What less part can be left to those who lose it
Than to lament its loss? Each man should speak,
Were I in your place, as his judgment dictates;
But act alone conformable to mine.

Silent foes alone are formidable:
And scatter'd poison injures not its object.
Frankly I speak to thee: I do not deem
My son for lofty enterprises fit:
Ah, were he so! Thou wouldst not hear me thus
Address thee abjectly; nor hadst thou seen
Me tremble and obey. 'Gainst foes like us,
Contempt, when managed with dexterity,
('Tis but too true) is adequate defense.
Behold, it seems to me, that, though no tyrant,
I can prescribe to thee, with decent skill,
The laws of tyranny, the stratagems,
The conduct, and the principles sublime.

Giuliano—What wouldst thou say to me? And know I
not,

As well as thou dost know, this son of thine?

Guglielmo—And dost thou fear him?

Giuliano—Feared, I fear again.
To simulate, or to dissimulate,
Were idle now. Let us for once renounce
In words, what always we renounce in deeds,

Maxims fallacious as they're plausible:
Not from our country, not from laws, or freedom,
But from self-love, and self-utility,
And apprehensions of contingent loss,
Let each of us, with more sincerity.
And with more wisdom, take this rule of conduct.
Lorenzo all the qualities possesses
By which a new state is increased and swayed,
Except forbearance and timidity:
Nature hath formed me in another mould;
And that which is deficient in himself
In me maybe excessive: but confess,
Art thou not e'en more timorous than I?
Do not I see the spirit of mistrust,
And apprehension, in thy smallest actions?
I know no base of some eternal rock
Is in the restless main more firmly placed,
Than Raimondo and Lorenzo stand unmoved
In their resolves: in nature they are equal,
Yet not in power: but equal is our fear.
As with my brother I exert myself,
Do thou exert thyself with this thy son.
Perhaps we'll yet see other times. Few years
Hast thou to live; yet these thou wouldst desire,
Though burthensome and comfortless, to spend—
Thou hast supported such—Would'st thou preserve
them?

Guglielmo—The terror of a tyrant, and a father,
No one would place in counteracting scales
Save he who is a tyrant and a father.
I feel my own alarm; thine, thou alone
Canst feel and estimate. Paternal fear,
Which is the most excusable, to-day
Surmounts the other. Far as I avail
I will exert myself, that Raimondo choose
Spontaneous exile; and 'twere best he should;

For not for vengeance, but for fresh injustice,
In these abhorred walls will he remain.

Scene Fourth

LORENZO, GIULIANO, GUGLIELMO.

Lorenzo—Giulian, what dost thou? Dost thou spend
in words

The time that others spend in deeds?

Giuliano—At last

This old man yields to my persuasive speech.

Dost spurn at peace before I've made it sure?

Lorenzo—Who talks of peace? Lo, Salviati comes,
The source of all disturbance, the contriver
Of every guilty, circumventive plot.

Giuliano—I know it; but meanwhile—

Lorenzo—And dost thou know,
That from the south he brings armed warriors here?
In truth no martial race: to whom we ought
To show ourselves, and only show ourselves.
At the first lightning of our shields, at once
Their threat'ning cloud will be dispersed. Indeed,
What courage founded not in others' fears,
Was e'er display'd by Rome?

Giuliano—And how, my lord,
Can one defenseless citizen's return
From Tiber's banks excite suspicion in thee?
And to your detriment would Rome now arm,
Who so infrequently and clumsily
Combats, and only in her own defense?

Lorenzo—More than one hero hath been made to
tremble
Before the Pope's perfidious myrmidons.
'Mid roses and 'mid lilies they conceal
Daggers and poison. It is true, their arms

Would, if foreseen, be always impotent.
Ye satellites of Rome, I leave you here:
Plot ye till I return. My brother, come;
Let us depart. We will afterward
With these resume our conference: but first
Let those pale, quivering banners that display
The surreptitious keys, seized or dispersed,
Or burned, or trampled in the squalid filth,
Fall by our hands. We should first somewhat shake
The putrid, aged trunk on which fraud leans;
Since it belongs to ages more remote
To eradicate it wholly. Let us go.
With joy my heart leaps up in thrusting thee
Against an open enemy, O sword!
And only I regret, if thou disdain
To smite the back of hostile fugitives,
That here thou must return, fasting from blood.

[Exit.

Scene Fifth

GUGLIELMO.

Guglielmo—He has a lofty soul; a soul too great
For tyranny. And doubtless he will reign,
Except he fall a victim to our swords.
But reign, reign at thy pleasure; thou shalt soon
Quickly resemble thy perfidious brother:
Crafty, flagitious, apprehensive, cruel;
In short, what ought to be, and is, who reigns.
But now the light increases, and my son
Comes not to me; nor Salviati comes.
But of the Roman troops not yet in march
How could Lorenzo hear? This enterprise
Which we project is hard to execute;
And doubtful its success. But yet the rage,
The vengeance, tempered with sagacity,
Of Raimondo, reassure me.—Let me seek him.

Scene Sixth

RAIMONDO, SALVIATI, GUGLIELMO.

Guglielmo—Tell me in what condition are our plans.

Raimondo—Almost completed.

Salviati—Heaven smiles on us:

My hopes are more than realized.

Guglielmo—Far more

Than I was heretofore, ye find me ready,
And for an ample vengeance. Insolence!
Here, Giuliano took upon himself
To covenant with me for our disgrace;
And afterward Lorenzo joined his brother,
Threat'ning and arrogant. I spake to him
Now doubtful words, indignant now, now feigned;
For the most part in servile tones disguised,
To tyrants so acceptable: they deem
No crime so dire as that of fearlessness.
I would not rouse suspicion in their souls;
They think me full of fear. But tell me how
The secret of the foreign armament
Hath thus in part transpired? Lorenzo seems,
'Tis true, to view it with consummate scorn,
And to account it th' ineffectual fruit
Of home-bred intrigues fostered by ourselves.
Such confidence assists us; and though Giuliano
Hath intimated that he apprehends
Domestic discontents, he fancies not
The vengeance so inevitably near,
Or so alarming as it is. Ah, say,
Is our success then certain? What assailant,
What arms, what means, where, when?

Raimondo—Hear thou the whole.

Meanwhile with wonder be not stupefied
At what Lorenzo knows. We artfully,
Their forces to divert, at first proclaimed

The foe's approach. But in the vulgar ear
 The arms of Rome exclusively resound:
 "The holy Sixtus sends a little aid
 To rescue from their recent servitude
 The oppress'd Tuscan." The report behold,
 In consequence of which I hope the tyrants
 A scanty but an open force expecting,
 Would turn toward this alone their anxious thoughts;
 And rightly I conjectured. To the camp,
 At dawn of day, Lorenzo hastes to go;
 But too inevitably will arise
 That dawn for him, destined to be his last.
 Both shall be slain to-morrow. I have chosen
 A few, but stubborn both in hand and heart,
 For the great enterprise. Anselmo, Albert,
 Napoleon, and Bandini, and thy son.
 Rinato vile, dishonoring our race,
 Refused to be one of this noble band.

Guglielmo—Coward! and should he now betray us—

Raimondo—Oh,

Could he imagine that! but, free from vice,
 He has no virtue: speak of him no more.
 Ready for any sign, Anselmo keeps
 His armèd men; but wherefore they know not:
 We shall begin th' attack at the same time
 That he shall occupy the greater forum,
 The palace; and the many avenues
 Thitherward tending; thence the populace
 Invite to freedom: we, meanwhile, shall join them.

Guglielmo—But in one place t'inflict on them one
 death

Do you expect? Woe, if an interval,
 E'en of one moment, 'twixt the blows elapse!

Raimondo—Ere from these walls they issue to the
 camp,

At dawn of day, both to the church will go

T' implore Heaven's aid to their tyrannic arms:
There shall they both be slain.

Guglielmo—What do I hear?
In the house of God?

Salviati—Yes, in the house of God.
What victim can we offer to the skies
More welcome than an immolated tyrant?
Hath he not set th' example to defy
Men, laws, and nature, and high Heaven itself?
Guglielmo—Thou speakest truly; yet with human blood
To desecrate the altars—

Salviati—Human blood,
The blood of tyrants? They who on man's blood
Do feed? And for such monsters shall there be
A sacred refuge? Turpitude be safe
There, where eternal justice has its throne?
Were they both wreathed round their Maker's image,
For that I would not sheathe my lifted sword.

Guglielmo—The people, who behold with other eyes
Actions like these, with thundering voice will call us
Irreverent, sacrilegious homicides.
This universal prejudice alone
Our enterprise may thwart, or wrest from us
All its advantages.

Raimondo—On th' other hand
This interval alone can serve our purpose:
There is no superfluity of time;
To-morrow they are sacrificed, or never.
That which is needful is t' insure the blows;
Nor any place adapted to insure them
Is there like this. Considerest thou the people?
More than with anger, with astonishment
All innovation they are apt to view.
We will give orders that, at the same moment
In which we draw our swords, the sacred roof
Shall echo with the anathemas of Rome.

Guglielmo—'Tis true, the name of Rome may do much here.

But which of us the honor shall obtain
Of the first blow? What post shall I fill up?
Wrath, impulse, courage, here alone suffice not.
Rather a will extravagantly warm
May injure here. A cold, ferocious valor,
A prompt and steady hand, a face unmoved,
A heart whose element is human blood,
A mute inflexibility of lip,
Men should have these who are tyrannicides.
A motion, nod, or look inopportune,
Nay, e'en a thought, may break the fatal charm,
The destined victim's confidence may thwart,
Time for the deed, the perpetrator's courage.

Raimondo—We have ourselves arranged the first attack:

The first blow shall be mine: to quench their thirst
Then the less resolute shall venture forth,
Soon as the dastard tyrants on the earth,
Weltering in blood, praying for life, shall fall.
Father, the signal heard, if thou repair
Where stands Anselmo, thou wilt aid us much,
Far more than in the temple, from whose shelter,
Soon as the blow is hurled, we shall rush forth
I grieve that I alone cannot at once
Both of them murder. Oh! what saidst thou, father?
A prompt and steady hand? This very steel
Shall sooner fail than my right hand and heart.

Guglielmo—Why, emulating thee, can I not strike?
'Tis true, too true, alas! that, weak with age,
My tremulous limbs to my untrembling heart
May give the lie. Thou art a light from Heaven
To dissipate my doubts: thou hast thought well:
For all hast well provided; and in vain
I speak. It pleases me that the first blows

Ye have awarded to yourselves alone.
 How much I envy you! I only feared
 Thou wouldst refuse, with victims so impure,
 To stain thy sacerdotal hand—

Salviati—How ill

Thou knowest me! Behold my dagger; see it;
 'Tis no less sacred than the hand that grasps it:
 The holy Sixtus, having blessed it first,
 To me consigned it. Interchangeably
 The same hand grasped the crosier and the sword:
 T' extinguish tyrants, and their impious slaves,
 The mighty God of battle armed himself,
 The right hand, never fallible, and dire,
 Of his anointed priests. These arms I grasp,
 These consecrated, homicidal arms,
 Shall hang one day an offering on these altars.
 A fury more than human hath inflamed me:
 And though I bring an arm unused to blood,
 That heaven-descended fury, to the heart
 Which I have chosen to pierce, shall guide my hand.

Guglielmo—And hast thou chosen then?

Salviati—Lorenzo!

Guglielmo—Ah!

The most ferocious?

Raimondo—Though I had preferred
 To slay the stronger, yet I have agreed
 In this t' indulge him. Furthermore, I thought
 Assuredly the abject Giuliano
 Would fence his cowardice in hidden mail;
 Whence, as the enterprise most difficult,
 Him I accepted. Thou shalt have Lorenzo;
 And Giuliano is my destined prey.
 E'en now I grasp him: now within that breast,
 Receptacle of treachery and fraud,
 The sword I plunge up to the very hilt.
 The signal to unsheathe, and to assault,

Will be the sacred moment when, by hymns
Chanted in whispers, from his high abode
The Son of God mysteriously drawn down,
Enters the consecrated element.
Now thou knowest all: as soon as thou shalt hear
The tolling of the saintly bell, rush forth;
And then remember that our enterprise
Has been defeated, or is perfected.

Guglielmo—I will do all.—Let us now separate:
O Night, thou last of slavery or life,
Hasten thy flagging and invidious course!
Do thou meanwhile inflexibly, O son,
Distrust Bianca: love doth often make
A woman's heart consummate in discernment.
And thou, O Salviati, recollect,
That if thy first blow futile should be found,
Lorenzo is not one to give thee time,
Or opportunity, to aim a second.

ACT V

Scene First

RAIMONDO, BIANCA.

Raimondo—What wouldst thou now? retire to thy
apartments:

Leave me; I shall return here instantly.

Bianca—And may I not go with thee?

Raimondo—No.

Bianca—Ah, why?

Raimondo—Thou canst not.

Bianca—Dost thou disregard me thus?

Oh, dear departed days, where are ye gone?

Then from thy side thou didst not banish me;
 Nor didst thou ever move but I moved with thee,
 Blessing thy never solitary steps!
 Wherefore do I displease thee? and in what
 Have I offended thee? Thou fliest from me;
 And, what is worse, thou driv'st me from thy presence.
 Ah, then, the sound of this my once-loved voice,
 No longer reaches, much less penetrates,
 Thy alienated heart! I will pursue thee,
 If only at a distance.

Raimondo—But what fear'st thou?
 Or what dost thou suspect?

Bianca—Thou know'st.

Raimondo—I know
 That thou lov'st me, that thee I also love;
 Love thee far more than thou canst comprehend.
 My lips divulge it not; but every gesture,
 My looks, my countenance, my heart declare it.
 Now, if I send thee from me, or avoid thee,
 I do it, since I wish to inflict thee less
 With my calamities. What solace, say,
 Canst thou give me?

Bianca—Cannot I weep with thee?

Raimondo—To see thee waste away thy life in tears.
 In useless tears, redoubles my affliction.
 I fly from all society, thou seest;
 And to myself am burthensome.

Bianca—I see
 Far more than this; too certainly I see
 That thou mistrustest me.

Raimondo—I tell thee not
 All my misfortunes?

Bianca—Thy misfortunes, yes;
 But not their remedies. With some great scheme
 Thy heart is laboring; and thou deemest not
 That thou shouldst tell it to me? Conceal it, then.

I ask of thee alone to follow thee;
And thou refuseth it? I may, perchance,
A little help, but never injure thee.

Raimondo—What say'st thou? Nothing in my heart
I hide

Except my rage, as useless as 'tis ancient.

Bianca—But yet this long, uninterrupted night,
Which scarcely yet the rising dawn disperses.
How different, ah, how very different,
Was it to thee from all preceding nights!
Not one brief moment did calm sleep descend
Upon thy weary eyes. Thou closed'st them
The better to deceive me; but the thick
And frequent pantings of thy breast; thy sighs
Suppressed by force; thy face alternately
Inflamed with fire, or bathed in hues of death—
All I observed, yes, all; for love watched with me:
I'm not deceived: in vain thou wouldst conceal—

Raimondo—And vainly dost thou rave. Above my
head,

'Tis true, that genial and profound repose
Spread not its wings; but often it is so.
And who the blessedness of sleep enjoys
Where tyrants dwell? Eternally on high,
Above the head of slaves, a naked sword
Hangs by a slender thread! Save idiots, here
No other men repose.

Bianca—What wilt thou say
Of thy so sudden starting from thy pillow?
Is this thy wonted hour? The shades of night
Were undiminished yet, when thou already
Hadst leaped abruptly from thy bed, like one
Whom unaccustomed care consumes. Toward me
Did not I see thee afterward direct,
Sighing, thy humid eyes? and scarcely risen,
Thy children one by one embrace? embrace!

Nay, rather to thy breast a thousand times
 Press them, devouring them with kisses;
 Convulsed with agony, did not I see thee,
 With copious torrent of paternal tears,
 Their little breasts and faces inundate?
 Thou, erewhile so ferocious? Thou, a man
 Whose eyes are never visited by tears?
 Shall I see these things, and not apprehend
 That something vast and ominous lies hid
 In the recesses of thy laboring heart?

Raimondo—I wept?

Bianca—And thou deniest it?

Raimondo—I wept?

Bianca—With unshed tears thine eyes are humid still.
 If on this breast thou shedd'st them not, ah, where?

Raimondo—Feel, feel, these eyes are dry; no tears
 are there;

And if erewhile I wept—I wept the fate
 Of the poor children of an outraged father.
 Must I incessantly not weep their birth,
 And their existence? Wretched little ones!
 What fate in this long death, which we call life,
 Awaits you! To increase your infamy,
 Ye are at once the tyrants' slaves and nephews.
 I ne'er embrace you but I weep for this.
 These pledges of our love, let them be dear
 To thee, O consort; since I, with a love,
 Love them too different from thy love; and now
 Too different from these corrupted times.
 Yet, notwithstanding, weep their destiny.
 And, to their father, take especial heed
 They be not like, if it can comfort thee
 Rather to bring them up to servitude,
 Than to the practice or the love of virtue.

Bianca—O Heaven! what words! My sons! Alas!
 In danger?

Raimondo—If peril rises, I confide them to thee,
Do thou withdraw them from the tyrants' rage,
Should it be ever needful.

Bianca—Woe is me!
Now I perceive, I understand, and now
Am certain. Art thou come, O fatal day?
Now is the mighty enterprise mature:
Thou wouldest change the state.

Raimondo—And if I would,
Have I sufficient strength for such a deed?
I would perchance accomplish it; but oh,
These are the visions of a maniac.

Bianca—Ah! ill thou feignest: those beloved lips
Are not accustomed to deceive thy consort.
That thou dost undertake a mighty task
My terror tells me; and those various,
Tremendous workings of thy countenance,
That in a crowd in quick succession throng,
Despairing agony, compassion, rage,
Hatred, revenge, and love. Ah, by those children,
Which thou, spite of thyself, dost so much love—
Not by myself, oh, no! for I am nothing—
And by thy eldest child, our growing hope,
Our mutual, precious hope, I do conjure thee,
At least, in part, reveal to me thy thoughts!
Only convince me thou'rt exempt from danger,
And I am pacified: if 'tis not so,
Suffer me at thy side. Ah! how can I
Save thy dear children, if I do not know
What perils threaten them? I fall, I fall,
Prostrate before thee: I will never rise
Till thou dost speak. If thou mistrustest me,
Slay me at once; if, on the other hand,
Thou dost confide in me, why art thou silent?
I am thy wife, and nothing else. Ah, speak!

Raimondo—Lady, oh, rise! Thy terror represents

Dangers to thy affrighted fantasy,
At present far removed. Arise, return;
Continue with thy children, I to them
Will also come ere long. Leave me.

Bianca—Ah, no!

Raimondo—Leave me; 'tis my command.

Bianca—Abandon thee?

Ah! rather kill me: by no other means
Shall this fond grasp be loosened.

Raimond—Cease!

Bianca—O Heaven!

Raimondo—Desist; or I—

Bianca—I will pursue thy steps.

Raimondo—Ah, wretched me! Behold my father here!
Behold my father.

Scene Second

GUGLIELMO, RAIMONDO, BIANCA.

Guglielmo—What dost thou do here?
There are who now expect thee at the temple;
And meanwhile idle here?

Raimondo—Heardst thou? I go;
What dost thou fear? Ah, stay; detain her, father.
I fly and soon return. To thee, Bianca,
My children I commend, if thou lov'st me.

Scene Third

GUGLIELMO, BIANCA.

Bianca—What words! Ah, wretched me! to death he
flies!

And thou forbiddest me to follow him!
Cruel!

Guglielmo—Stay, stay; be pacified; ere long
He will return.

Bianca—Cruel! dost thou thus feel
Compassion for thy son? Thou leavest him
Alone to encounter death, and thou'rt a father!
If thus thou canst, abandon him; but, ah!
Stop not my steps: Loose me, I will go to him.
Guglielmo—Thy going now would be mistimed and
late.

Bianca—Late! Ah! it is then true that he attempts—
Ah! tell me! Speak, or let me go. Where flies he?
To some most dangerous enterprise, I know;
But ought I not to hear of what belongs
To such a precious portion of myself?
Do you indeed more than myself remember
The blood from which I spring? Ah, speak! I am
Now fashioned of your blood: I do not hate
My brothers, but I love only Raimondo.
I love him much as human heart can love;
And now I fear for him, lest, ere he take
The state from them, they take from him his life.

Guglielmo—If this be what thou fear'st, and since thou
seem'st
To know so much already, be assured
Less dubious is his life than that of others.

Bianca—Oh, heaven! are then my brothers' lives in
danger?

Guglielmo—Tyrants are never safe.

Bianca—What do I hear?

Alas!

Guglielmo—Think'st thou that one can wrest the state
From those possessing it, and not their lives?

Bianca—My consort...then,...seeks...to betray...
my blood?

Guglielmo—Yes, it behooves us treacherously to spill
Their blood, ere ours they treacherously quaff;
And to the hard extremity by force
They have compelled us. Instantly from thee

Thy husband and thy children had been taken;
 Ah, thence 'twas indispensable for us
 To anticipate their cruel purposes.
 Myself, thou seest, to aid the enterprise
 Have girt the sword, so many years disused,
 To my enfeebled side.

Bianca—Ferocious souls!
 Dissembling hearts! I could not have believed—

Guglielmo—Daughter, what wouldst thou? Stern
 necessity

To this compels us. For us to retract
 'Tis now too late. Put up what vows to heaven
 Thou likest best: meanwhile escape from hence
 Is not allowed to thee: thou'rt guarded now
 By many armed warriors. If thou art,
 As thou shouldst be more than aught else, a mother,
 Return to thy poor children, ah, return!
 But now, methinks, I hear the sacred toll
 Of the lugubrious bell. I'm not mistaken.
 Oh, son! I fly to liberty or death!

Scene Fourth

BIANCA, armed soldiers.

Bianca—Hear me! Oh, how he flies! and I am forced
 To tarry here! In pity let me go.
 This is the only breast that, interposed,
 Can staunch that sea of blood. Are your hard hearts,
 Barbarians, inaccessible to pity?
 Impious, flagitious, execrable marriage!
 I ought to have foreseen that blood alone
 Could finish such immeasurable hate.
 Now I perceive why Raimondo could not speak:
 In truth thou wisely didst to hide from me
 Such unimaginable wickedness.

I thought thee capable of high revenge,
But never of an abject treason, never.
What tumult do I hear? Oh, heaven! What shrieks!
Methinks the earth shakes! Oh! with what a loud
And clamorous dissonance the air rebounds!
The name of liberty, of liberty,
I hear distinctly. [The soldiers retire.] Ah! perhaps al-
ready
My brothers are no more. Whom do I see?
Oh, heavens! Raimondo!

Scene Fifth

RAIMONDO, BIANCA.

Bianca—Wretch! what hast thou done?
Speak! Return'st thou, perfidious spouse! to me,
Thy guilty dagger reeking with my blood?
Who would have ever thought thou wert a traitor!
What do I see? Alas! from thy own side
The blood spouts forth in ample streams!
Raimondo—*Bianca*...scarcely...I...support myself.
Ah, spouse...
Sustain me...Dost thou see? That blood ...which
bathes
My sword...it is...the tyrant's; but—
Bianca—Alas!
Raimondo—This is my own blood; I, in my own side—
Bianca—Oh! frightful wound!
Raimondo—Frightful indeed. . . .Myself,
With my own hand...blinded by too much rage
Inflicted it...I fell on Giuliano;
And planted in him so, so many wounds,
That I...with one...at last...transfixed myself.
Bianca—Oh, fatal cruelty! Oh, mortal blow!
How many of us hast thou slain at once!

Raimondo—I told it not to thee: Ah, pardon me!
 Thee should I not have told; nor shouldst thou
 Have heard of it, till it was done: and yet,
 At all events, I was constrained to do it.
 It grieves me that to consummate the deed
 My strength allows not. If it was a crime,
 I come to expiate it with my blood,
 Before thine eyes. But oh! I hear the cry
 Of liberty more fervently resound!
 And I am dying here!

Bianca—Oh, heaven! and—fell—
 Lorenzo—also?

Raimondo—A most strict injunction
 I gave to his assailant for this purpose.
 I shall die unlamenting, if I leave
 Safe, and in liberty, my sire, my spouse,
 My children, and my fellow-citizens.

Bianca—Thou leavest me to tears. But shall I live?
 Give me thy sword!

Raimondo—Bianca, Oh, sweet spouse!
 Part of myself, remember thou'rt a mother.
 Thou for our children shouldst consent to live;
 Live for our children, if thou lovest me.

Bianca—Oh, children! But the dissonance increases.

Raimondo—Now it approaches; and I seem to hear
 Discordant cries. Run to the little ones,
 And leave them not; to their protection fly.
 Alas! for me...no hope...of life...remains.
 Thou seest...that...I am...a dying man.

Bianca—What shall I do? Near whom shall I remain?
 What do I hear? The cry of "Slay the traitor!"
 The traitor, who?

Raimondo—The vanquished is the traitor.

Scene Sixth

LORENZO, GUGLIELMO, BIANCA, RAIMONDO, and
a reinforcement of soldiers.

Lorenzo—Slay him!

Raimondo—Oh, sight!

Bianca—And dost thou live, my brother?
Have pity!

Lorenzo—Here the miscreant sought a refuge;
And slunk from danger to his consort's arms.
In vain; drag him by force.

Bianca—My spouse! my children!

Raimondo—Thou manacled, O father!

Guglielmo—And thou wounded!

Lorenzo—Oh! what do I behold? Thy faithless blood
Thou sheddest from thy side! Now, who forestalled
My arm?

Raimondo—Mine; but it erred: this was a blow
Aimed at thy brother's heart. But he from me
Had many more like this.

Lorenzo—Dead is my brother;
But I live, yes, I live; and to kill me,
A soul unlike that of an inexpert,
That of a perjured and a dastard priest,
Was needful. *Salviati* lifeless fell;
And with him fell his comrades: I reserved
Thy father only, that to see thy death
Ere he gained his, might aggravate his pangs.

Bianca—What boots this cruelty? He languishes
Half dead.

Lorenzo—And thus, half dead, do I exult.

Bianca—He hath the punishment of his offense.

Lorenzo—What do I see? Dost thou embrace a
wretch
Stained with thy brother's blood?

Bianca—He is my husband,
And he is dying.

Raimondo—Whence dost thou beseech him?
See, if thy death were trusted to my power,
Whether thou wouldest live. [In his heart he plants a
sword which he had hidden at the arrival of
Lorenzo.]

Bianca—What hast thou done?

Raimondo—I...never ..strike...in vain.

Guglielmo—Oh, son!

Raimondo—Oh, father!

Imitate me. Behold the sword.

Bianca—'Tis mine.

Lorenzo—No, it is mine. [He wrests the sword from
the hand of Guglielmo, which, cast to him by
Raimondo, he had snatched up.] Thou mur-
derer of my brother,

How many other deaths, O sword, art thou
Ordain'd to give!

Raimondo—Consort, farewell... forever!

Bianca—And shall I live?

Guglielmo—Oh, terrible sight!—Quick, quick,
Put me to death: why dost thou hesitate?

Lorenzo—Now to thy infamous torture thou shalt go.
Meanwhile by force from that unworthy neck
Sever the weeping lady. Time alone
Can soothe her grief. And time alone can prove
That I'm no tyrant, and that these are traitors.

MARY STUART

MARY STUART

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MARY, Queen of Scots.

HENRY, Lord Darnley.

JAMES, Earl of Bothwell.

JAMES BUTLER, Duke of Ormond.

JAMES STUART, Earl of Murray.

Scene: The Palace in Edinburgh.

ACT I

Scene First

MARY, MURRAY.

Murray—If thou darest hear the truth, O Queen, I dare
To thee express it, since thy faithful people
Of this esteem me capable; and since
Around the throne there are none who incline,
Or dare to speak it. In my breast I bear
A flame, not fed by human sympathies,
Which, caught from Him, aspires to God alone.

Mary—Your license yields no small encouragement
(Whether by me indulged, or snatched by you)
To popular license. Your unhallowed schemes,
Beneath the sacred shelter of the Church,
Securely flourish: ye are now detected.
But, that it may be manifest that I
Hear truth as fearlessly as thou canst speak it,
I listen to thee; speak.

Murray—It grieveth me
That I have not found favor in thy sight;
But perhaps I now may serve thee; to do this
Will be more meritorious than to please thee.
These tears of mine are not dissembled tears:
Nor are they prompted by fallacious fear:
These tears are representative of those
Which all thy people shed, this voice of mine
The organ of all hearts. Now answer me;
I, in all Scotland's name, the question ask;
Tell me, art thou a widow or a consort?
Is he, whom thou thyself hast, by thy side,

Placed on the throne, who has the name of king,
Is he thy spouse? or enemy, or slave?

Mary—Henry a slave, or enemy, to me?
How speakest thou? My lover and my spouse
My heart accounts him always; but of his
Who can affirm the same?

Murray—He, far from thee,
Can ill appreciate thy genuine thoughts;
Thou his still worse.

Mary—Who keeps him far from me?
'Tis self-imposed, this exile from the court.
How many times have I invited him
To return here? Yet erewhile, when I was
Reduced by sickness to the brink of death,
Did he not only never visit me,
But never once sought tidings of my welfare?
This was the best reward of my affection;
I pass o'er others; and I pass it o'er,
That from my vassal I made him your king,
And for a long time mine; that for his sake
To the most powerful kings of Christendom
My right hand I refused; but I would fain
Confer, and not remember, benefits.
Perhaps e'en now the many unjust insults
By Henry shown to me, I might forget,
If I beheld in him, on their account,
Even the flattery of feigned remorse.

Murray—Thy cold reception banished him from thee,
The whispers of the court, the audacious looks
Of servile satellites, perfidious smiles,
Nods, and inquisitorial insolence,
And all the arts devised by courtly men
To wound, yet cast the wrong upon the wounded;
Arts not alone effectual to drive thence
A man, distinguished by a monarch's name,
But one the most enduring and most passive.

Mary—And when each individual of this court,
As emulous to win his favor, smiled,
Was his deportment different? The torch
Of Hymen still for us was here illumined,
And I perceived too early that his heart
Was of the throne, and not of me, enamored.
How oft, alas! my lukewarm royal bed
I bathed with tears! How oft to heaven complained
Of the importuning rank, by which I lost
That best of human blessings, the sole good
That sheds some sweetness in life's bitter cup,
Loving, and being loved! Yet, though exempt
From false and overweening self-esteem,
I saw myself e'en in the flower of youth,
That youth adorned with more than common beauty;
I felt myself (and thence had more to give,
Than either youth or beauty can impart)
With real love inflamed. What gain'd I hence?
I bore the cruellest of human insults.
Regardless of my honor, as of his,
Rizzio he murdered with an impious hand;
Eternal blot to both!

Murray—And what? Is that
E'en yet by thee remember'd? A vile stranger
Raised to supreme command, at once displeased
Thy consort, and thy people—

Mary—But should he
Have made himself the assassin of that stranger?
How could he act so that men might infer
That I burned toward him with flagitious love?
Just God, thou know'st it well!—To me was Rizzio
A faithful counselor, profoundly skill'd
In all the various characters of men,
A minister expert: and by his means
I steered securely 'mid conflicting parties.
Vain, by his means, were the perfidious snares,

So oft repeated, of Elizabeth,
My bitter, indefatigable foe.
Lastly, by his means, Henry, with my hand,
My scepter gain'd. Nor did he feel contempt,
Proud as he was, and crafty in his pride,
For the vile stranger, while he saw in him
The instrument by which he was to gain
The distant crown. He gain'd it: and from him
What recompense did Rizzio thence receive?
Amid the quiet shades of night, beneath
My royal roof, 'mid hospitable rites,
The sacred confidence of privacy,
'Midst helpless ladies, and before my eyes,
Bearing within my womb the first dear pledge
Of our unhappy loves, he comes by stealth
For trait'rous purposes, and dares defile
With blood, as guiltless as it was ignoble,
My table, my apartment, and my dress,
Nay e'en my person, and worse still, my fame.

Murray—Rizzio was raised unduly. To a king,
Can any circumstance be more offensive,
Than to derive his honors from a subject?
He who once gave might take away the throne;
And he who thus might take it is by kings
Hated and slain. But yet, to thy revenge
Henry surrendered his accomplices.
With blood, methinks, for blood thou mad'st atonement.
I come not here to speak in Henry's praise.
He is inferior to the throne; who knows
Not this? But I come hither to remind thee
That he's thy consort; that from him there springs
The scepter's only heir. On you reverts
A heavy scandal from your private jars;
And we are menaced with impending danger.
'Tis said that he returns to-day: ere this
He hath returned; but evermore from hence,

More gloomy hath retired, and afterward
A deeper sadness hover'd o'er thy palace.
Let him not come in vain to-day, I pray thee.
Enough, too many, jarring elements
This realm contains within itself. I see
Religion by a thousand different sects
Trodden to earth, profess'd yet disobey'd.
The consummation of our woes would be
Royal dissension; ah, avert it, Queen!
Without the poison of a flattering tongue,
From a sincere heart, fervently I speak.

Mary—I trust to thy professions, but enough!
Now the first audience ought I soon to give
To the ambassador from England.—Go—
Leave me:—Know thou, and say it, if thou wilt,
To all my people, that of my good fame
I live not so regardless as to need
That others now remind me of my duty.
That which by love of truth thou art compelled
To say to me, do thou repeat to Henry,
To whom 'twere more adapted. If he can,
Let him, without resentment or alarm,
This thy free language hear, to which, in proof
Of an offenceless conscience, I have listened.

[Exit Murray.]

Scene Second

MARY.

Mary—Ye lying demagogues of the blind vulgar,
Ye instigators of an impious sect,
Must I be doom'd eternally to hear
Your arrogant harangues?—Of all the griefs
That plant, with thorns, the throne on which I sit,
These are the hardest to endure; yet I
Am forced to bear them, till my tarnished throne
Resume, through me, its pristine brightness.

Scene Third

MARY, ORMOND.

Ormond—O Queen, to thee, the messenger of peace,
And the confirmer of eternal friendship,
Elizabeth hath sent me: in her name,
In every enterprise, I offer thee
Her powerful assistance.

Mary—I already
Know by experience what her friendship is;
Hence mayest thou infer the extent of mine.

Ormond—Hence I derive the confidence and courage
To intercede with thee—

Mary—For whom?

Ormond—Thou knowest
That marriage-rites have not yet shackled her;
That of her throne thy son is hitherto
The only successor; may it please thee,
For the dear sake of this belovèd child,
The hope of both these realms, precious to us,
No less than to thyself, to banish from thee
All rancor that thy heart may entertain
Against his father. Thou, at all events,
Didst choose him for thy spouse; and can it now
Be true, that a precipitate divorce
Should sever him from thee?

Mary—And who has spread
Such tales of me? False be they, or malignant;
Yet if the threshold of Elizabeth
Haply they reach, must they find faith in her?
Not e'en a single project of divorce
I ever entertained; yet were it so,
What meanest thou? Could that to *her* give umbrage,
Whom to my nuptials formerly I found
So utterly averse?

Ormond—Elizabeth,
Though never envious of thy happiness,
Was jealous of thy honor. She applied
Counsel both frank and friendly, to thy free
And royal judgment. She dissuaded thee
From nuptials somewhat less illustrious,
Than might befit an independent princess;
But nothing more. Persuaded thoroughly
Of thy fixed resolution, she was silent;
Nor do I think that blame to her attaches,
If thou art not in perfect happiness.

Mary—"Tis true: kept she not in hard fetters bound
Henry, whom I had chosen for my consort,
So that, a fugitive from prison, he
Came to my royal bed; and his right hand,
Still livid from the pressure of her chains,
To my right hand he joined? Does she not now,
In a well-guarded tower, within her realm,
Retain by force the mother of my spouse?
'Tis well becoming her, indeed, to feel,
To-day, compassion for her former prisoner.
Thou shouldst from this most exquisite distress
Relieve her by assuring her that Henry
Lives, at his pleasure, in full liberty,
Within its precincts, or remote from court;
That from my heart I have not banished him;
And that I never wished, nor do I now,
To pry into the secret cares of others.

Ormond—Nor does Elizabeth, within thy palace,
Presume to penetrate, more than is fitting,
With curious indiscretion. Royal secrets,
Though known to all, to every king are sacred.
I am commanded to suggest to thee,
Respectfully, that to a double realm
One heir alone affords a hope too scanty;
And that the existence of a single child

Has much of casualty and incertitude.

Mary—This most magnanimous solicitude
Of her great heart hath in my heart inspired
Reciprocal solicitude. I still
Cherish the hope to be again a mother:
And still to make *her* happy, who partakes
In all my joys, with a new numerous offspring.
But, if she is as prodigal of aid
As of advice to me, I hope ere long
To see in perfect peace, not only this
My palace, but my realm.

Ormond—To obtain such peace,
I in her name now venture to propose
As the best means—

Mary—They are—?

Ormond—No doubtful means.
She wishes thee somewhat more mild to those
Who not thy yoke, but that of Rome, have spurned.
E'en as thy other, these are faithful subjects,
And far surpassing them in strength and numbers;
They feel as men, and are thy loyal sons;
To whom their different creed alone procures
Such disproportionate oppression.

Scene Fourth

MARY, ORMOND, BOTHWELL.

Mary—Ah, come; oh, Bothwell, enter these apartments.
Hear what incredible advice, to me,
The representative of England's queen
Brings in his mistress' name. She wishes me
More mild toward the heretics; she wishes
Myself and Henry indivisible;
And trembles lest divorce should sever us.

Bothwell—Now who could give her of thy government

Such false impressions? What religious sect
Hast thou e'er persecuted? Who to-day
Dares even to pronounce the word divorce?
This day, on which Henry returns to thee.

Ormond—To-day, say'st thou?

Mary—Yes. Now thou see'st how I
Anticipate Elizabeth's desires.

Ormond—Deceitful fame exempts not even kings.
Laden with false intelligence it came
E'en to my mistress; as there came to thee
A character of her not less fallacious,
Which painted her thy foe. I entertain
(Perhaps 'tis self-flattery) the lofty hope
Of being of your genuine sentiments
The not unwelcome true interpreter;
While, in compliance with the will of each,
A station in thy presence I maintain
No less felicitous than dignified.

Mary—Oft are the deeds of those, by lofty rank
Exposed to scrutiny, perversely judged:
Mine, hitherto by innocence inspired,
Shrink from no witnesses. Be they made known
By thee to Elizabeth: meanwhile, as well
For thy own sake as hers who sent thee hither,
Thou wilt be always honored in my court.

[Exit Ormond.]

Scene Fifth

MARY, BOTHWELL.

Mary—Hard to endure! Well do I know her hate
And rancor; yet am I constrained to admit
And honor her delator. With new arts
She now assails me. Recommends the good
That I may do it not. She asks of me
To grant a toleration to the sects;

But, that I persecute them, in her heart
She wishes. She dissuades me from divorce;
Ah! then she hopes to hasten it. I know
That much as ever sceptered mortal erred,
She wills that I should err. With her own arts
I shall know how to parry her attacks.
I will, by granting her dissembled wishes,
More and more torture her malignant heart.

Bothwell—Thou knowest I said this to thee, when
thou deignedst
To unfold thy thoughts to me. Henry should not
Now be remote from thee for various reasons.
Whether his menaces to quit the realm
Be true or feign'd, thou ought'st to take from him
The means of doing it, by watching over him.

Mary—The shame of such a flight would fall on me.
His throne, his son, his country, and his consort,
Quitting, and begging a precarious shelter;
Who that beholds him thus will deem me guiltless?
I will not be a fable to the world;
Rather will I embrace the worst misfortunes.

Bothwell—Thou hast well chosen. Oh! were this the
day
That full domestic peace returned once more!
Since he to thy solicitations yields,
To which he hitherto was deaf, at length
Thou mayest hope.

Mary—Yes, I would fain believe it.
At last, a true though late remorse for all
His past ingratitude conducts him here.
He still will find me to himself unchanged;
And, if I see him penitent, disposed
To pardon all the past.

Bothwell—Ah! were he so!
Thou know'st full well how much I wish thee happy.

Mary—The recollection of my debt to thee

Will never quit my mind. Thou hast avenged
The throne insulted by the foes of Rizzio,
By their just punishment. I found in thee
A sure defender in the camp, against
The open rebels; 'gainst the hidden ones,
More despicable far, to me wert thou
A faithful counselor within my court.
Thou hast at once contrived to disconcert
Henry's imprudent plots, yet recollect
That that same Henry was thy sovereign's husband.

Bothwell—Fatal address! Ah! may there no more be
Occasion for exerting it!

Mary—Ah, yes!

If Henry hear me, and believe my love,
(Which he alone believes not) I may yet
Hope for all happiness. The throne to me
Is far less precious than my husband's heart.
But let us hear him; I have hopes e'en yet.
Heaven may do much; fortune may be propitious.
But where I would of counsel or address
Avail myself, thou more than other men
My projects canst promote.

Bothwell—My arm, my blood,
My substance, and my judgment (if indeed
I be so gifted), all, O Queen, are thine.

ACT II

Scene First

DARNLEY, MURRAY.

Darnley—Yes, I repeat to thee, I hither come
To wreak full vengeance on my enemies,
Or bid farewell eternal to these walls.

Murray—Thou doest well. But thou should'st not, O
King,

Flatter thyself with prosperous event
To thy designs, while thou dost steel thy heart
Against its inward conflicts of remorse,
Against the frequently-repeated signs
Of an offended God. Thou long hast been
Full certain of the errors of the faith
That thou professest: the dire vestiges,
At every step, by thousands and by thousands,
Of thy perverse and persecuting sect
Crowd on thy path: yet dar'st thou not shake off
The guilty yoke of sacrilegious Rome;
Whence in the sight of all the world thou art
Despised, and impious in the sight of God.
This is the first, too plainly, and, alas!
This the sole cause of thy adversity.

Darnley—More than convinced I am that I ought not
E'er to have sought this fatal royal bond:
Not that the rank to which it raises me
O'erwhelms my faculties; this very scepter
Was no unknown weight to my ancestors.
But I regret that I reflected not
What a capricious and unstable thing
The heart of woman is; and what a weight
A benefit imposes, when received
From one that is not skilled to give it wisely.

Murray—My soul is cast not in a vulgar mould:
Hear me, O Henry! Favor in the court
I do not seek: the love of peace inspires me.
'Tis in thy power for all thy past mistakes
To make a full atonement, and to win
To paths of virtue thy bewildered consort;
To make thy people blest—the chosen sons,
Not of the terrible God of wrath and blood
(Whose earthly type is fulminating Rome).

But the true sons of the compassionate God,
Who are iniquitously trodden down,
These may'st thou rescue; and may'st dissipate
The impure mists, which, from the Tiber's stream
(The corrupt source of tyranny and fraud),
With pestilential influence arise.

Darnley—And what? wilt thou that I misspend my
time

In disputations vain about vain rites,
And frivolous subtleties of brain-sick fools,
When I am loudly called on to defend
My honor and my rank?

Murray—Dar'st thou miscall
These questions vain, when they a thousand times
Have ta'en away and given realms and lives?
If thy heart feels a just contempt for Rome,
Why not confess it? Raise thy standard high,
And thou shalt have as many partisans
As there are here who execrate her rites.

Darnley—I do not feed myself with civil bloodshed:
Or seek elsewhere that peace I have not here.

Murray—What are thy hopes? Will it bring peace
to thee

To see from distant climes thy native country
Burn with internal broils? For to fly hence
Is but assuredly to give the signal
For civil war.—To arms I prompt thee not;
I am not, no, the minister of blood.
To frustrate more atrocious grievances,
And from oppression liberate thy friends,
Ere to rebellion they be driven—to this,
Naught else, do I exhort thee. Violence
Thou should'st not use; but hinder that of others.
Mary, who with her foreign milk imbibed
As at a fountain inexhaustible
Foreign delusions; Mary, who unites,

For Scotland's ruin, in her youthful breast
The persecuting principles of Rome
With the soft manners of effeminate France—
I do not bid thee ever to forget
That the same Mary is thy spouse and sovereign.
Leave her at her own will to think and act:
We have not learn'd her persecuting tenets;
We wish alone for liberty and peace;
May they be gained through thee! Thou may'st at once
Procure thy peace and ours. An obscure storm
I see, which threatens us, which also may
Fall on thy head, if thou refuse to hear me.
The vilest miscreants in these precincts lurk,
And lurk in numbers, who would ruin thee,
And who at once calumniate and detest thee.
In vain thou wouldst among them hope to find
Sincerity and honor; we are they
(If yet indeed there be true Scots) of Rome,
Of guilty, foreign, and effeminate fashions
The inveterate foes; and equally the foes
Of foreign and augmenting tyranny.
Wouldst be the moderate king of worthy men?
'Tis yet within thy power: wouldst rather be
The tyrant of the guilty? There are they
Who wish this more than thou. There are who have
Already made a scepter of the sword.
The knot is too perplexed; it must be cut,
It cannot be unloosed. Why thus I speak
Heaven knows; and if I wish for aught but peace.
Act then according to thy judgment. I
Already have resigned the hope that truth
Should by a king be e'er from me believed.

[Exit.]

Scene Second

DARNLEY.

Darnley—Murray may be sincere; but my hard fate
Hath so o'erruled me that the choice of errors
Alone remains for me.—Already all
Convinces me that I return in vain:
Each tongue is dumb; and the reluctant Queen
Delays to welcome me; and all the rest—
Oh, rage! But she approaches: be she heard;
I shall be better able to resolve
After this conference.

[Enter Mary.]

Scene Third

DARNLEY, MARY

Mary—Thou'rt welcome here,
Thou, whom I chose for all my griefs and joys
The inseparable partner. Thou at last
Compliest, and dost listen to my prayers.
At last within thy palace thou returnest;
That it is always thine thou knowest well,
Although in voluntary banishment
From thence it pleases thee to live so far.

Darnley—Queen—

Mary—Why thus call me? Why not call me consort?

Darnley—Say, are our destinies the same?

Mary—Ah, no!

Thou mak'st me spend my tedious days in tears.

Darnley—My tears thou seest not.

Mary—I have beheld thee

Bedew, 'tis true, thy cheek with tears of rage,
Never of love.

Darnley—Be the cause what it may,
I wept, and still I weep.

Mary—And who can cure
This ceaseless grief, who wipe my tearful eyes,
Who to my heart restore pure, genuine joy,
Who, if not thou?

Darnley—Which of us has the power,
And having that, the will, will soon be seen.
Meanwhile I tell thee that to-day I do not
Come for repeated insults—

Mary—Why wilt thou,
Oh, heaven! thus irritate before thou hearest me?
If thou deem it an insult to behold
Other men's judgments not submit to thine,
Here oft, I grant, but always spite of me,
Wert thou insulted. Their immunities
Monarchs possess, and monarchies their laws,
And their infringement is to all injurious;
Nor dared I hinder thee from breaking them,
Than as I should myself have been restrained
If an unwise desire had prompted me
To arbitrary power. But if of me,
If of my heart thou speakest, of my love
For thee, and of my private fondnesses,
Beloved consort, what part of myself
Have I not given thee unreservedly?
My lord and my support, say, wert not thou
My first, my last, my sole solicitude?
And thou wilt evermore be so, if thou
Wilt only lay aside thy unjust wrath,
And, far as usage of the law permits,
E'en now indeed wilt be lord of the realm,
And, without any limitation, mine.

Darnley—The ostentation I esteem an insult;
The haughty manners toward myself adopted
By the audacious ministers, or friends,
Or slaves, or counselors, or parasites,
For I know not how I should designate

Those that around thee stand. And I esteem
That which I meet with every day an insult;
To be still flattered by the name of king,
While I'm not only of the power bereft,
But even of the superficial pomp
That waits on royalty; to see myself
Rather in servitude than liberty;
My motions and my words, my deeds and thoughts,
Investigated all, and all betray'd;
Bereft of every solace of a father;
Not only not to be allowed to watch
The education of my only son,
But from his presence to be interdicted,
And myself only—why should I say more?
What boots it to enumerate one by one
My many wrongs? Thou know'st how comfortless,
How much neglected, and how much oppressed,
Degraded, and perhaps how much betrayed,
Is he whom thou unluckily hast chosen
The partner of thy throne, yet, having chosen,
Whom self-respect forbids thee to despise.

Mary—Perhaps I also might reply to thee
That thy incautious actions have alone
So far reduced thee; and I might suggest,
With what unworthy recompense at first
Thou didst return my love; that more intent
To subjugate, than, with benignant arts,
To gain the minds of Scotland's haughty chiefs,
Impatient of restraint, thou lost them quite;
And too much trusting in thy faithless friends,
At first thou drewest from their intercourse
Pernicious counsels, treason afterward,
And detriment, and forfeiture of love.
I might speak further. But can I proceed?
Ah, no! That is a superficial love
Which watches, blames, or does presume to judge

The imperfections of the beloved object.
To oblivion everlastingly by me
Be these consign'd. If it can soothe thy heart
That I should seem the injurer, not the injured,
So let it be; to me 'tis unimportant
Where lies the cause, so that we both escape,
And chiefly thou, all baneful consequence.
Do thou and all thy friends calm thoughts resume:
Open once more thy breast to confidence;
Nor let fantastic thoughts of novelty
Thy judgment captivate. Within thy palace
Reigning, learn thou the arts of government.
I do not dare propose myself to thee
As one well skilled in such a complex art;
For, inexpert, I oftentimes have erred:
My immature capacity, my sex,
Perhaps a natural defect of judgment,
In many indiscretions have involved me.
I only know, so far as in me lies,
To choose sagacious and just counselors;
And, hence assisted, with a trembling foot
To try the vast and formidable lists
Of perilous royalty. Ah! were I skilled
In reigning as I am in loving thee!

Darnley—But, save thy husband, each man in the court
Appears a just, sagacious counselor:
And he's the only one in whom designs
Of private benefit may not abide:

Mary—Or at least ought not.—But refrain awhile:
Thou in my heart hast fixed suspicion's wound;
And do thou heal it. Not that I retain,
I swear to thee, the recollection of it,
Much less its rancor: ah, believe my words!
But separation does not strengthen love,
Nor mitigate suspicion. By my side
Stand evermore; I shall esteem that day

Forever fortunate on which I shall
Perhaps give thee, in fair exchange for one,
A thousand proofs of love. Malignant spies,
I know, there are not wanting, who delight
Betwixt us to maintain disgraceful discord,
And seek perhaps to foster it. But, if
Thou wilt be ever near me, in whom else,
Better than in thyself, can I confide?

Darnley—I hear seducing words, but I endure
Deeds of increasing rancor.

Mary—But what wouldst thou?
Speak; and I will do all.

Darnley—I would, in fact,
Be father, consort, king; or of these names
I will divest myself.

Mary—Thou wouldst have all
Except my heart. And more than thy demand
Refusal wounds my soul. Ah! would to heaven
That thou at least with this wert satisfied.
Yes, far as in me lies, thou shalt have all;
I only ask of thee, that thou preserve
Some decency toward me before the world;
And that henceforth thou shalt repeat no more
Thy former exhibition of contempt.
Ah! if thou lov'st me not, let others think,
At least, that thou esteemest me! To this
I do conjure thee by the common pledge
Not of thy love, but mine. Thou shalt again
Behold our only, our beloved son;
To thy paternal arms shall he be brought;
That thou'rt a king, a consort, and a father,
May he remind thee.

Darnley—I am well aware
What is my duty; if I have appear'd
Unequal to its weight, the fault was theirs
Who have from me transferred it to themselves.

To-day am I resolved, e'en more than others,
To recompense affection with affection,
But artifice with scorn. This single day
Will be sufficient to bring all to light.
I in the faces of thy friends shall see
The court's implicit rule, thy secret thoughts. [Exit.

Scene Fourth

MARY, BOTHWELL.

Bothwell—May I approach, the exulting witness now
Of thy recovered joy? Thy husband, say,
Of what complexion are his present thoughts?
Is he reformed?

Mary—Inflexibly the same.
Why do I say? He to his former rage
Unites a smile of bitter irony,
And turns to ridicule my earnest words.
Ah, wretched me! What means have I now left
To soften his asperity? I speak
Of love; he speaks of power: I am the injured,
Yet he the plaintiff. By ambitious thoughts,
Yet destitute of all sublimity,
His bosom is attainted and depraved.

Bothwell—But what does he demand?

Mary—Untrammelled power.

Bothwell—But hast thou that to give?

Mary—He now would deem
That power a bauble which I gave to him
Ere he compelled me to resume the gift.
He has consigned to blank oblivion
The perils whence I rescued him.

Bothwell—Yet thou
Canst not, without incurring blame, refuse
To share that power of which thyself art mistress

With him that is thy husband. That which he
Possessed before and which the laws do give,
E'en at thy risk thou must restore him all.

Mary—I still should have, if I could love him less,
E'en more than one resource: to suffer him,
Left to himself, headlong to rush at once
In numberless inextricable snares;
For the result can ne'er be prosperous
Of his ill-planned and worse-transacted schemes.
But I exist, assailed on every side
By an o'erwhelming tempest. His misfortunes,
In one respect, affect me more than him;
But yet, if he alone prefers his ruin,
Still will that ruin be a heavy blow
To me, come when it may. And then—my son!
O heaven! if toward my son my thoughts I turn,
On whom, perchance, the errors of his father
May one day fall!—I am no longer able—

Bothwell—Queen, thou desir'st me not to flatter thee:
And I impose it on myself to serve thee.
A mother's and a consort's love alone
Combat within thy bosom. Save thy son,
Thou should'st give all to Henry.

Mary—And that son
Precisely, more than all the rest, he asks.

Bothwell—But is he thine to give? Say, is he not
Rather our public pledge? Where were the wonder
If he, a guilty spouse, proved a worse father?

Mary—But yet, to quiet his perturbed spirit,
I promised him—

Bothwell—Thy son? He to rule him?
Take heed!

Mary—He to rule him? Myself I venture not
To do it; and to others shall I yield him?

Bothwell—'Tis then but a precautionary step,
Lest others take him from thee?

Mary—To *what* tend
These thy insinuations? Perhaps thou knowest—
Bothwell—I? Nothing. But I think perhaps by chance
Henry to-day return'd not. Hitherto
I've been the first to cut off all the means
Whence the vain threats of Henry (whether feign'd
Or real) e'er to thee could be reported
By the informers that in courts abound.
But to more culpable contrivances
Should he direct his thoughts, whate'er the risk,
'Twould be my duty to reveal to thee,
Not what he says, but what he aims to do.

Mary—He hath been hitherto assuredly
To my repeated invitations deaf;
And now, who knows? But speak; perhaps to-day
Some indirect and circumventing purpose
May bring him back to court.

Bothwell—I do not think it;
But I should be a witless counselor
If I from time to time suggested not
Precautionary thoughts of what may be.
He never was assail'd for this his son
With overweening fondness; wherefore then
Demand him now? And Ormond too pretends
Anxious desire to see the royal youth;
And he brings with him all the stratagems
Of his most crafty queen. All may be feared;
Yet nothing there may be; but on the throne
Blind trust is an unpardonable fault.

Mary—Must I forever from one agony
Be driven to another? Wretched fate!
Yet what can I now do?

Bothwell—Watch while I watch;
Thou canst do nought beside: if it be false,
My fear can do no harm; if true, some good.
Under what pretext seems most plausible,

Only contrive that Henry now should have
Apartments separate from these in which
The royal youth resides; and leave *him* here
Guarded by thy most faithful partisans
Unintermittingly. Do thou henceforth
Go from this place, and occupy with Henry,
As a more cheerful or more healthful dwelling,
The ancient castle which commands the city.
There may'st thou quickly see what influence
Thy love has o'er him. Thus thou'lt clear his path,
If thoughts of reformation sway his will;
And thus, if evil purposes possess him,
Wilt check all danger, even to himself.

Mary—Wise is thy counsel; I adhere to it.
Do thou meanwhile, for my security,
Glory, and peace, efficient means invent,
And gentle ones, whence I may frustrate ills
Past remedy, if gathering strength from time.

ACT III

Scene First

DARNLEY.

Darnley—Delay does me no good; nor should I now
Temporize longer. Spite of my desire,
A treacherous pageantry of honor waits me.
Why is this unaccustomed dwelling-place
To me assigned? 'Tis true, beneath one roof
Innocence and imposture ill unite;
The treacherous palace is no home for me;
But the insult is too open; and too clear
The implied mistrust. Let me decide at last,

At last adopt some measures. Ormond seeks
To speak to me; let him be heard. Perchance
He may suggest, when I the least expect it,
Some remedy, some project of deliverance.

Scene Second

DARNLEY, ORMOND.

Darnley—To this new court, which has no parallel,
Thou'rt welcome, Ormond.

Ormond—Thy vicissitudes
To us are too well known. Elizabeth,
A mere spectator hither sends me not;
But, her heart full of grief for thee, she wills
That I should be 'twixt you the instrument
Of perfect peace.

Darnley—Peace? Where there is not found
Entire equality, peace? Oftentimes
Have I been flattered with so fond a hope,
But still have been deceived.

Ormond—But yet, methinks,
This day to peace is sacred.

Darnley—Thou'rt deceived.
To pass all bounds of sufferance with me
This is the day selected; and at once
This is the day on which I have resolved
No more to suffer.

Ormond—What! dost thou believe
That the Queen's heart is not toward thee sincere?

Darnley—Her heart? Who sees it? But not even
words

Hear I from her, in which I may confide.

Ormond—If she deceive thee, thy disdain is just.
Although I come the messenger of peace,
Yet I presume (instructed thus to act,
If it were needful, by Elizabeth)

To offer thee, whiche'er best suit thy wishes,
Advice, assistance, or to be thy guide.

Darnley—If in my heart ignoble passions dwelt,
Without assistance I could means devise,
And certain means of vengeance. But, alas!
Nor guide, nor guardian friend is there, who now
Were competent to clear the obstructed path
For the attainment of the peace I wish.
Oh, bitter is the state in which I live!
If toward violence I turn my thoughts,
If then indeed not criminal, forthwith,
I seem at least ungrateful; yet, again,
If I in part relent, the insolence
And the presumption of those courtly slaves,
Who are the origin of every ill,
Beyond all bounds I foster. Thence I fix,
Amid the many schemes I might pursue,
On nothing long; and to them all prefer
To go away in voluntary exile.

Ormond—What would'st thou do, O King? This remedy,
If I might be allowed to speak to thee,
Appears to me worse than the ill itself.

Darnley—It seems not so to me; and I expect
That hence more injury would fall on others,
Than shame upon myself.

Ormond—But know'st thou not
That an expatriated king excites
Rather contempt than pity? And should he
Even excite compassion, would he thence
Be ever satisfied?

Darnley—When power is gone,
What profits arrogance? I now am here,
Of all men least, a monarch not obeyed.

Ormond—But then, in changing climes, would'st thou
obtain

The privileges that private men enjoy?
Or of a monarch's name divest thyself?
Ah! since thou givest me with thy discourse
Boldness to speak, let me convince thee of it.
Whither direct thy steps? To France? Reflect
That there to Mary is the royal race
Allied by blood and friendship; that all there
Applaud her character, where she at first
Imbided their soft, insinuating customs.
There thou wilt find a messenger from Rome,
Furnished with pardons and indulgences,
Ready to invade, if thou giv'st place to him,
This miserable realm. Thus to thy foes
Thou wilt thyself surrender; instantly
They will contrive to prove thee criminal.

Darnley—And do I live surrounded here by friends?

Ormond—Thou livest in thy kingdom. I should add
To thee, in vain, how the perfidious Spaniard,
The effeminate Italian, an asylum,
The one precarious, the other infamous,
Would offer to thy person; I proceed:
(And thence thou may'st infer if I speak truth)
I, in the first place, counsel thee to fly
To Elizabeth for shelter.

Darnley—Shall a land
Be refuge where I once was prisoner?
I never entertained so wild a thought.
There is my mother forcibly confined—

Ormond—Dost thou not see it clearly? Much less free,
And less secure, here would thy mother be
Than she is there. I controvert it not;
Elizabeth was adverse to thee once:
But royal counsels change with change of times.
Scarce did she see from you an heir arise,
Of her no less than his maternal realm,
Than she, entirely pacified, toward him,

As toward her offspring, turned her every thought;
And more reluctant from this time became
To yield herself to the connubial yoke.
Afterward hearing that thou had'st incurred
Hostility from Mary; and that those
Who had renounced the servitude of Rome
Pined in oppression, that the royal child,
E'en with his milk, perniciously imbibed
Errors of superstition, much she grieved.
Hence she commanded me, if toward thyself
Mary changed not her conduct, to direct
To thee alone the instructions I received;
And means I offer thee (not means of blood,
For as thyself I hold those means accursed)
By which thou wilt infallibly regain
All thy primeval splendor—in one word
By which thou may'st be free. Propitiate
Elizabeth; to thy beloved son
Secure a loftier, and a safer station;
Snatch Mary from imposture; disconcert
Thy guilty foes; all this, if so thou wilt,
Quickly thou may'st perform.

Darnley—What dost thou mean?

Ormond—That which is possible to do: which thou
Alone canst do, others not e'en attempt.
The royal heir, thy son, will be the means
Of thy advancement, and at once of peace.

Darnley—How?

Ormond—Within these thresholds maxims are in-
stilled
That will confirm his servitude to Rome—
He that is destined one day to possess
The united scepters of Britannia's isle.
Elizabeth, and with her, all her realm,
With vigilant and apprehensive looks,
Behold this threatened bias: recent yet

Are in my country the inflicted wounds,
With which another Mary tortured her,
At the instigation of the Spanish Philip.
Eternal, and immitigable hate,
And such devotion of heroic rage,
Hath Spain to us bequeathed, that each of us
Would rather perish, than again obey
The abhorred and cruel ritual of blood.
Thy son will be compelled to disavow
The Roman worship, should the day arrive,
When he is called to fill the British throne;
Were it not better for himself, for us,
That he should ne'er imbibe a heresy,
Which, would he be our king, he must recant?

Darnley—Who denies this? And perhaps thou think-
est me

More in my heart attached to Rome than others?
But how can I, according to my judgment,
Bring up my son, whose very intercourse
To me is interdicted?

Ormondo—But wouldst thou
Be master of his person, by that step
Thou wouldst gain all.

Darnley—Hence is he taken from me.

Ormondo—But wouldst thou

Darnley—But guards
Watch always.

Ormond—These may be deceived, be bribed.

Darnley—And grant that I obtain him; afterward
How shall I keep him?

Ormond—I will keep him for thee.

Beneath Elizabeth's protecting eye
He shall grow up: and she will be to him
More than a mother. Fed with lofty thoughts,
There shall he learn to reign; let me avail
Only to rescue him from hence, and thou

Shalt quickly see thyself the master here.
Elizabeth shall make thee be proclaimed,
During his adolescence, for thy son,
The sovereign-regent of this realm; henceforth
Thou may'st assign thy spouse what part seems best
Of delegated power; precisely that, in short,
Which she appears to thee to merit.

Darnley—This
Is a momentous scheme...

Ormond—Does it offend thee?

Darnley—No; but it seems of difficult performance.

Ormond—Be but audacious; all will then be easy.

Darnley—We have conferred too long. Leave me
awhile:

I would reflect upon it at my leisure.

Ormond—Ere long then I return to thee: the time
Is urgent...

Darnley—When the night is far advanced,
And unobserved, as much as possible,
Return to me.

Ormond—I will at thy commands
Come here. Meanwhile, O Henry, recollect,
That blows when least expected always fall
The most severe; that purposes of state
Require it; and that thou wilt hence derive
Both honor and advantage to thyself. [Exit.

Scene Third

DARNLEY.

Darnley—I hence win honor, if I win advantage.
This is a mighty scheme, and mighty ills
May hence originate. But yet, what ills?
Though it bestead me not, so circumstanced
Am I that nothing now can injure me.
Who comes? What can that man now seek from me?

Scene Fourth

DARNLEY, BOTHWELL.

Darnley—What wantest thou with me? Bring'st thou perchance

The usual homage to thy pageant king?

Bothwell—Although thou treatest me with such disdain,

I, not the less, am still thy faithful subject.

To thee the Queen despatched me: she has learned,

That thou, as of an insult, bitterly

Complainest of the abode assigned to thee.

Know that she means, ere long, to join thee here,

With thee to dwell: and further I am bound

To say to thee—

Darnley—More than the different dwelling,

Far more, it mortifies me to observe

That every word I utter is repeated.

Yet this injustice is not new to me.

Now go; and tell her that if I ought not

To deem myself thence injured, such excuse

Although not more believed, at least had been

More welcome from her lips; and not by means

Of an ambassador.

Bothwell—If thou wouldst lend

To her a somewhat more benignant ear,

My lord, far other sentiments than these

Thou wouldst hear from her lips; nor should I be

The messenger selected; but she fears

Lest that her words to thee—

Darnley—She apprehends

To wound me with her words, yet seeks at once

To do it with her deeds.

Bothwell—Thou art deceived.

I know how much she loves thee; and in proof,

I, though unwelcome to thee, though by thee

Suspected wrongfully, addressed myself
To bring to thee a message so important,
That to another than myself the Queen
Would not confide it: it is such that thou
Art bound to hear it; neither from her lips
Would Mary venture to express it to thee:
A message that 'tis difficult to speak,
But which, if told to you as she suggested,
As the expostulation of a friend,
Clearly denotes no lukewarm tenderness.

Darnley—Com'st thou the interpreter of nuptial secrets?

Thou, who art thou?

Bothwell—Since thou wouldst fain forget
The action of Dunbar, whence, having first
The rebels slain, I reconducted you
Both here in safety to your throne, I am
One who, because it is imposed on him,
Now speaks to thee.

Darnley—But it is not imposed
On me to hear thee.

Bothwell—Yet thou hearest others.

Darnley—What say'st thou? Others? What audacity?

Bothwell—Thou in these thresholds art betrayed; but
not

By those whom thou mistrustest. Thou thyself,
E'en more than all of us, shouldst doubt a man
To whom the function of ambassador
Impulse an opportunity affords
To perfidy unpunished. To ourselves
Ormond comes not the messenger of peace;
And yet thou hearest him at length—

Darnley—Ye traitors!

Is this to me imputed as a crime?
E'en as ye are perfidious ye are vile;

Ye twist to evil every deed of mine.
Ormond th' entreated audience obtained:
I sought him not: ambassador to me
He came not here.

Bothwell—Assuredly he came
Contriving machinations 'gainst thyself.
Were he alone a traitor! But already
E'en more defective in dexterity
Than in discretion he has proved himself.
Far too precipitately he divulged
His hidden hopes, his culpable designs:
With this incaution he betrayed himself
So prematurely, that before he spoke
With thee, the Queen already knew the whole.
Nor thence, for him whom he would fain delude
Has the Queen's bosom so much wrath conceived
As generous pity. In her name, O King,
I do adjure thee to renounce thy error;
Nor, with thy own dishonor, do thou bring
Advantage to the traitor, detriment
To her who loves thee.

Darnley—More explicitly
Speak thou, or cease to speak. Mysterious words
I do not comprehend; I only know,
That where ye all alike are traitorous,
I can among you hardly recognize
Which of you is chief traitor.

Bothwell—"Tis most easy
To see who most would profit by thy ruin.
Elizabeth, your persevering foe,
Your envious, crafty, and ferocious foe,
Dreads peace betwixt you. What canst hope from her?

Darnley—From her? I nothing hope, and nothing ask.
And nothing—But what knowest thou? Speak on.
What is alleged against me? What believes,
And what says, Mary?

Bothwell—When a heart is generous,
There need no others to reprove its faults.
What ought I now to say? Except that Ormond
Is an incendiary; that snares are laid
For thy destruction; and that for thy son,
Thy innocent son, Mary, with many tears,
Conjures thee now—

Darnley—Oh! wherefore does she weep?
Thou layest snares for me.

Bothwell—My lord, thou art
Thy own deceiver; I deceive thee not.
The schemes of Ormond were already known,
Already from his indiscreet expressions,
Before he came here to propose it to thee,
That impious stratagem transpired—

Darnley—To me?
How darest thou, miscreant, thus speak to me?
If thou proceedest, I will make thee—

Bothwell—Thus,
My lord, I have fulfilled the task imposed.

Darnley—And I my toleration have exhausted.

Bothwell—I spoke, because I was impelled by duty.

Darnley—Beyond thy duty hast thou spoken. Hence!

Bothwell—What to the Queen must I report?

Darnley—Go; tell her
That thou art rash.

Bothwell—My lord—

Darnley—What, not yet gone? [Exit Bothwell.

Scene Fifth

DARNLEY.

Darnley—All, all are base; and I am like the rest.
Oh, dark abyss of infamy and fraud!
Ah, fool, that could, in an ambassador
Sent from Elizabeth, place confidence!

Scene Sixth

DARNLEY, ORMOND.

Darnley—Return'st thou here so soon?

Ormond—One doubt alone

Remains unsatisfied: hence I return.

Darnley—Thou witless traitor! dar'st thou in my sight
Appear again?

Ormond—Alas! what has befallen?

Darnley—Say, didst thou hope that I should not discover

Whence sprung thy fraudulent proposals?
And further, hopest thou they will remain
Unpunished?

Ormond—Whence so unexpectedly
Art thou thus changed? Erewhile thou spak'st to me—

Darnley—Erewhile I wished to see to what a length
Thy hostile and insidious stratagems,
Beneath a mask of peace, would carry thee.
But didst thou ever think that I would deign
To supplicate in your deceitful realm
Assistance for myself, or for my son
A perilous asylum?

Ormond—If I was
The artificer of fraud with thee, think'st thou
That it was now my fault?

Darnley—It was the fault
Both of thyself, and her who sent thee here,
And of thy hated function.

Ormond—Rather say
Of the abhorrèd court in which I'm stationed.
The crime was hatched in this perfidious soil.
Should I have ever, of my own accord,
Presumed to tamper with thee? In such guilt
Mary involved me, to whose will, in all things,
Elizabeth commanded me to yield.

That which she willed I said: and now, of this,
A double treachery accuses me
To thee. Oh, no, I shall not be deceived!
May heaven permit, henceforth, that I engage
In no transaction with a race like this.
Whatever here may be the consequence,
I feel that I am innocent; such now
Do I proclaim myself; and such elsewhere
I shall proclaim myself with loftier voice. [Exit.

Scene Seventh

DARNLEY.

Darnley—Thou say'st the truth; whose guilt is like to
hers?

I am the laughing-stock of all. Ah, rage!
Once more shall this perfidious woman hear me,
Yet once more hear my voice. I am compelled
To give the last indulgence to my rage
In a few words; but afterward 'tis time
To try more rigorous efficacious measures.

ACT IV

Scene First

DARNLEY, MARY.

Darnley—Queen, I abhor deceit; it serves me not;
And, if it served me, I would not adopt it.
But thou, why dost thou clothe perfidious schemes
With simulated love? I have, I know,
Offended thee; but openly I did it.
Thou shouldst from me have learned at least the rules
By which 'tis lawful to offend an equal.

Mary—What words are these? What hast thou met
with, say?

Or ere firm peace betwixt us is renewed,
I hear already—

Darnley—Peace 'twixt us, say'st thou?
I swear betwixt us everlasting discord!
Avow thy purposes, and copy me.
I would, at last, to thee point out the way
By which thou may'st pour out thy fathomless
And pent-up rancor; I would spare to thee
Further deceptions, further flatteries,
And further crimes.

Mary—Oh, heavens! and such rebuke
Do I deserve from thee?

Darnley—'Tis fitly said.

Thy guilt at length to such a pitch is risen,
That all rebukes are vain. Disdainful silence
Were more judicious; to thy crimes more fitted.
But yet this transient utterance somewhat soothes me;
And, for the last time, now to make thee hear
This voice, which to thy conscience-stricken heart
Is not supportable. Means of redress,
Less infamous, and more effectual far
Than thine, are in my power. In thousand ways
I might, within thy realm, make head against thee;
Nor does thy power divert me from the purpose.
Myself alone commands inaction here;
I would not in our private broils involve
This unoffending people. But to-morrow
Thou shalt hear tidings of my destiny;
And may I never more behold thy face.
To thy remorse (if even that remains)
And to thy faithful counselors I leave thee.

Mary—Ungrateful! with more fitting epithet
Not to address thee. Of my boundless love
Is this the recompense? My sufferance long?

My unexampled sufferance? Speak'st thou thus?
Thus clear'st thee of thy fault? Whence thy contempt?
Dost thou no more remember who I am?
And who thou wert? Ah, pardon, pardon me!
Thou now compellest me to use a language,
To her that speaks it, far more than to him
Who hears it, insupportable. But how,
In what have I offended thee? By thus
Inviting thee, entreating thy return?
By the unguarded warmth of my reception?
By yielding thee too much? By deeming thee
Accessible to penitential thoughts,
Or wise resolves, or thy hard heart possessed
E'en of a momentary gratitude?

Darnley—The throne thou fillest; and the throne was
ever

Prolific in conclusive arguments.
But I am not amazed: whate'er has happened
Confirms the fears of my foreboding heart.
Yet is it fitting that I should assure thee
I never had recourse to artifice;
That I have not, so much as thou may'st deem,
A weak, a headstrong, or an abject spirit;
And that thy shameful arts—

Mary—Act as thou wilt;
I only do beseech thee not to soil
Thy language toward me with injurious phrases;
Thence equally unworthy him who speaks,
And her constrained to hear them.

Darnley—Evermore
In words do I offend thee: thou in deeds
Offendest me. Is the remembrance fled—

Mary—Profound remembrance in my heart I keep
Of the remonstrances so often uttered,
And so much disregarded; faithful, true,
And wise remonstrances, which, what thou art,

Thy manners, and thy dispositions, painted,
Ere I bestowed on thee this hand of mine.
Blinded by love, I would not see, believe—
Who then dissembled? Speak, ungrateful, speak!
Alas, alas! Repentance now is late,
And fruitless. O my God! and is it true
That thou, at all events, would'st rather I
Should be thy foe? That thou canst never make me
Thou plainly seest, that thou canst barely raise
A transient flame of anger in my breast;
One word of thine, one little word, suffices
To cancel every provocation past.
Provided thou wouldst hear it, my affection
Is ready still to whisper to my heart
All its too welcome flatteries. Oh, my husband,
Why wilt thou not, whate'er it be, confess
The reason of thy recent discontent?
Quickly will I—

Darnley—Art thou desirous, then
To hear it from my lips; although it is
Well known to thee, no less than to myself?
Thou shalt be satisfied without delay.
'Tis not thy feigned affection; not thy feigned
And flattering words; not the allotted dwelling;
'Tis not the separation from my son;
The promise of supreme authority
Changed into more intolerable wrongs;
I do not, no, of all these things complain;
These with the usual tenor correspond
Of thy deportment toward me; all the fault
Is mine, that I believed thee. But the wrong,
The only wrong that I cannot endure,
Is that which thou hast recently contrived.
And what? At last thou call'st Elizabeth—
In the so many indiscreet offences
With which thou plottest hourly to annoy me—

The false Elizabeth to take a part!

Mary—What dost thou now allege against me? What?
And say what proof hast thou?

Darnley—Ormond, 'tis true,
Is, but is not like others here, perfidious.
In vain thou sentest him to flatter me,
To tempt, to promise, to seduce. Didst thou
E'er hear of such a plot? At all events,
Thou thought'st to goad me into treachery.
Whence pretexts thou might'st afterward derive
For thy concealed iniquity.

Mary—What do I hear?
May heaven to ashes instantly reduce me,
If I e'er—

Darnley—Perjury avails not here.
At once I recognized the artifice;
And, the deceiver to deceive, I feigned
To yield to his entreaties: but I loathe,
And I am wearied of, such abject arts.
Ormond already has received from me
A final answer. Now Elizabeth
Will scorn thee, who detested thee before,
And she will be the first to blame, and raise
A clamorous outcry 'gainst those very crimes
To which herself impelled thee.

Mary—This is all
A vile imposture. Who thus dares to soil
My name with guilt?

Darnley—Thy minions all possess
Souls thoroughly imbued with perfidy.
Do not afflict thyself: they have but shown
Themselves not fully skilled in choice of time.
Bothwell and Ormond, nobly emulous
To fathom the recesses of my heart,
Have both their own, and thine, too much exposed.

Mary—If reason could have influence o'er the whole

Or wert thou in a state to hear it now,
It would be easy here to explain the whole;
To call them both together; and to hear—

Darnley—I be confronted with such men as these?

Mary—And how by any other means can I
Convince thee of the truth? How from thine eyes
Remove the bandage?

Darnley—'Tis removed already:

I see too clearly, yet wouldst thou at once
Convince me, and my apprehensions quell?
To thee but one infallible resource
Remains for this. From thee too I require
The execrable head of haughty Bothwell,
And Ormond's instant banishment. With this,
Say, art thou ready to comply?

Mary—At last

I see (alas, too evidently, see!)
To what thy wishes tend. Whoe'er he be
That may communicate to me the truth
Is for that cause alone obnoxious to thee;
He, be he whom he may, in whom I trust,
Becomes thy foe. Quickly renew at once
The massacre of Rizzio: thou art used
With thy own hands to execute thy vile
And unjust vengeance. Thou may'st destroy,
In the same generous, heroic guise,
The life of Bothwell. To interdict thy crimes
I have no power: reason forbids that I
Should imitate thee in these bloody rites.
Let Bothwell be condemned, if he is guilty;
But let him first be heard. While I disdain not
To subject e'en myself to the tribunal
Of solemn and irrefragable justice,
E'en the most abject individual here
Shall I dare subject to despotic power?

Darnley—Here guilty men can always challenge favor,
While from the worthy justice stands aloof.
See, what it is to reign! I take my leave;
Farewell!

Mary—Ah, hear me!

Darnley—I intend to pass
In the allotted fortress this last night,
Which I devote to anguish, not to sleep.
The invitation I accept; a dwelling,
Which I am not constrained to share with thee,
Is welcome to me, till to-morrow's dawn
Beholds me far from thy abhorred city.
I thought indeed e'en yet to stir in thee
Some perturbation; but I fondly thought it.
Thy face is tranquil as thy heart is false. [Exit.

Scene Second.

MARY.

Mary—Ah, wretched me! Where am I? What, alas!
Can I now do? What fury goads him on?
Whence can these infamous suspicions rise?
In what does he confide? In my despised,
Yet, as he deems, my undiminished love?
But, if he should attempt—Here he must stay;
If he departs from here, he will excite,
In every one he meets, hatred for me,
Rather than pity for himself. Heaven knows
That I no otherwise am culpable
Than that too much I loved him, and too little
Discerned him as he is. What now will say
The impious sects, accustomed so long time
To rail with bitterest calumnies against me?
These every day increase in strength and numbers.
Perchance on these the unworthy Henry leans.

Doubts, difficulties, errors, dangers, fears,
On all sides I discover. To resolve
Is perilous; to hesitate is worse.

Scene Third

MARY, BOTHWELL.

Mary—Bothwell, approach! if thou with thy advice
Canst not alleviate my distracted state,
Perchance I stand upon the very brink
Of a tremendous precipice.

Bothwell—Alas!

Long hast thou stood there; but now more than ever.

Mary—And what? With Henry's thoughts art thou
acquainted?

Bothwell—I know the deeds of Henry. But, O Queen,
Say have I e'er presumed to approach thy presence
The accuser of another, much less then
Of him who is thy husband? Yet to-day
Necessity compels me e'en to this.

Mary—Then plots have been contrived?

Bothwell—Contrived, say'st thou?

They had e'en now, had Bothwell not been here,
Been executed. Thou art well aware
That I suggested how much it behoved
To watch o'er Henry unremittingly,
And learn the actual cause of his return:
But, ere 'twas long, of all his purposes
I gained a full discovery. Ormond sought
A private audience; tampered with his faith;
With flatteries and promises assailed him:
Then dared he to propose to him, and gained,
That he should yield to him thy son—

Mary—My son!

To Ormond!

Bothwell—Yes; that he might bear him hence;
And place him shortly in the English court.

Mary—Ah, traitor! Thus despoil me of my son!
And yield him to her hands?

Bothwell—As recompense
For this his treachery, Henry covenants
That he exclusively should rule this realm.
He thence designs to dictate laws to thee,
To trample more and more beneath his feet
The sacred rites of Rome, and to devote
(Unnatural father!) everlastingly
His own son to perdition.

Mary—Say no more.
With horror am I stricken! And erewhile
He had so much audacity, that he
Himself to me imputed all the guilt
Of this abominable artifice.
He said that Ormond was impelled by me
To execute this project; that such snares
Were all of my contrivance: base accuser!

Bothwell—He had recourse to subterfuge with thee,
Fearing that thou his treachery hadst discovered.
I erewhile, in thy name, presumed to try
Dissuasive arguments: for such a fault
He sought excuses, but could find no means.
He cannot, nor knows how to contradict it;
Hence he burst forth in such immoderate rage
That what at first in me was mere surmise,
Became conviction. I to Ormond ran;
And the weak judgment, the precarious faith,
The irresolution, the inconstancy
Of Henry I displayed to him; and feigned
That that same Henry had incautiously
To me, in part, the stratagem divulged.
Ormond, although well versed in courtly arts,
Yet thought himself betrayed, and suddenly

Changing his views, denied it not to me;
Yet he asserted Henry was the first
To counsel him to seize the child; that he
Quickly determined to reveal to thee
The whole of this design; and that he feigned
With him, expressly for this purpose only,
To consent to it. Then I also feigned
To yield to him full credence; and at length
So far prevailed on him that he himself
Now comes to thee with a sincere confession
Of everything that happened. Wilt thou hear him?
He waits thy summons.

Mary—Let him come, and quickly. [Exit Bothwell.]

Scene Fourth

MARY.

Mary—My son! What have I heard? my son
surrendered
To that most cruel, envious, crafty queen!
And who surrenders him to her? His father;
His very father thus betrays his blood,
His honor, and himself! Was there, alas!
Such guilt e'er found united in one man
With such infatuation?

Scene Fifth

MARY, BOTHWELL, ORMOND.

Mary—Speak the truth;
Confess what Henry said to thee.

Ormond—He—Yes—
He bitterly deplored the antipathy
In which all hold him here.

Mary—This is not now
The time to soften down his words. The mask
Take off; confess to me his rash proposals,
And thy rash promises.

Ormond—'Tis true—that he—
Sought to obtain of me in his behalf
The interference of Elizabeth.

Mary—Now by sincerity alone thou canst
Defend thyself. I know the whole affair.
What boots concealment? 'Twere in vain for thee
To seek to elude confession. In the event,
Henry himself, as cautious in performing
As in contriving projects, had betrayed
Himself, and Ormond, and Elizabeth.
But from thy lips I fain would hear the truth.

Ormond—Henry complained to me that in this palace
His offspring, destined for a double realm,
Was trained perniciously: hence he himself
Determined to surrender him in hostage
To Elizabeth, a pledge of his good faith.

Mary—Oh, unexampled father! And didst thou
Consent to this?

Ormond—By a direct refusal
I would not quench his hopes too suddenly.
I feigned consent, to learn his further purpose.

Mary—Let this suffice; no more. Elizabeth,
The artificer of fraudulent designs,
Hither despatched thee: but, as I conceive,
In fraudulent designs more subtly planned.
Retire now; that which on thy own account
Thou dost not merit, to thy rank I yield.
Elizabeth meanwhile shall learn from me,
That an ambassador to me is due,
More dexterous at least, if not more faithful.

[Exit Ormond.]

Scene Sixth

MARY, BOTHWELL.

Bothwell—There's art, but mistimed art, in all his words.

'Twixt truth and lies how clumsily he shuffles!

'Tis well that he's found out in time.

Mary—I find not in me in this hour of need
Or strength to act, or wisdom to explore.
By doubts, by anger, and by fear, at once
I feel my heart as if asunder torn;
And, wouldst thou think it? still that heart retains
I know not what of hope—

Bothwell—And I too hope,
That now, since the discovered plot's defeated,
No others lurk behind it.

Mary—Be it so.
Yet such is he, that now that he perceives
His foolish enterprise discovered—

Bothwell—He!
What can he do?

Mary—He may forsake my realm.
His cruel, last farewell, already he—

Bothwell—Forsake the realm!—But e'en before 'twas
known,
This new aggression, thou didst interdict
With justice such a step: more just would be
That interdiction now; now that, perchance,
As an atonement for his frustrate schemes,
Others he would devise in foreign climes
With more successful boldness.

Mary—'Tis most just:
I oft have thought of this; but yet—

Bothwell—Who knows
Where his malignant steps might carry him?

Who knows what succor he might dare solicit?
He would obtain it; yes, too certainly
In other's rancor he would surely find
A firm alliance. Thou shouldst now select
The lesser evil.

Mary—But what may that be?

Bothwell—Better than I thou knowest it. But to have
Recourse to violence shocks thy noble heart—
Yet, what wouldst thou? Wouldst thou that Henry find
Protection from Elizabeth? If he
In person treat with her, far other plots—

Mary—Oh, fatal day! perhaps the harbinger
Of others still more fatal! Is it true
That thou at length art come? Disastrous day!
And apprehended long! Ah, wretched me!
'Gainst him who heretofore has shared my love,
Who shared the fondest wishes of my heart,
Shall I use violence? I cannot do it.
And, come what may come, I can never do it.

Bothwell—But think how deeply he may injure thee?

Mary—What injury can he inflict, that equals
The loss of his affection?

Bothwell—Should he once
Make good his flight from here, assuredly
Thou ne'er wouldst see him more.

Mary—Oh, heaven forbid!
May I not lose him quite.

Bothwell—And dost thou not,
Much as thy husband, love thy son, O mother?
That son is now in everlasting danger;
Death of the soul, the only real death,
Errors corrupting and heretical,
Await, thou knowest, his youthful innocence.

Mary—Assuredly I ought—but how, alas!

Bothwell—If Henry's liberty were somewhat lessened,
Or round his sacred royal person placed

Some slight impediments to its abuse—

Mary—He's too impatient of control already;
Remorse, disgrace, and turbulent despair
Might make him still more headstrong than he is,
And all my faithless and rebellious subjects
Would be his partisans.

Bothwell—I now perceive
One means by which thou mayest accomplish this,
And yet excite no tumult. One, no more.
The night descends: surround with armed men,
Amid its shades, the hill where singly towers
His royal dwelling. There is he ere now
Retired, there to wait for dawn of day,
And then depart from thence, he has with him
There a few obscure friends. There he may stay,
Courteously guarded: no one will attempt
Thus to lay hands on him; and thus at once
Thou mak'st his anger futile. Through this night
No man to him can penetrate: to-morrow
To thy just arguments for this allow
Free circulation; and to him allow
Permission to impugn them if he can.

Mary—This seems the safest plan; but yet—

Bothwell—Ah, think!

Thou hast no other.

Mary—But, in the execution—

Bothwell—I will take care of that, if thou desirest.

Mary—But should perchance the orders be exceeded?
Be on thy guard.

Bothwell—What dost thou apprehend?

That I'm incompetent to the execution?

But, ere we miss the occasion, time is short;
I fly!

Mary—Ah no; stay here!

Bothwell—For once, at least,

I will use violence with thee: recollect,

I saved thee once before.

Mary—I know it; but—

Bothwell—Confide in me!

[Exit.

Scene Seventh

MARY.

Mary—Ah! no—Suspend—He flies!

Oh, fatal and irrevocable moment!

Upon a thread my peace and fame now hang.

ACT V

Scene First

MARY, MURRAY.

Murray—Laying aside all ceremonious forms,

Anxious and breathless, I presume to come,

At an usual hour, to thy apartments.

Oh, what a night is this!

Mary—What wouldst thou now?

Murray—What hast thou done? Who thus has coun-
seled thee?

In the recesses of thy palace now

Canst thou securely sit, while armèd men

And military cries surround thy consort?

Mary—But whence this boldness in thee? All will see

To-morrow that I've robbed him of no power,

Except the power of injuring himself.

Murray—Whate'er the motive, the effect is monstrous,

'Tis cruel, terrible, and unexampled;

And far more raises fury in the people

Than strikes them with alarm. Now, well reflect:

There may be those who trick thee: perhaps I come

In time to reënlighen thee. To us,
From guilty satellites that inundate
All quarters of the city, in their hands
Bearing lugubrious torches and drawn swords,
Mischief alone can rise. What do these troops
Around the rock where stands the royal dwelling,
Ranked in a circle, with ferocious looks
Keeping each man at distance?

Mary—For my deeds
Am I accountable to thee? Correct
Are my designs. They shall be known to those
Who ought to know them. Dost thou place thy trust
In the audacious people?

Murray—In myself
I trust alone, and in that God of truth
Of whom I am the minister. From me
Life thou may'st take, but not sincerity,
And free and lofty speech. Beside thy spouse
Destroy me if thou wilt; but hear me first.

Mary—What words are these? oh, heavens! and do
I wish
My husband's blood? and who with this can charge me?

Murray—Oh, spectacle of woe! The unwarlike stag
Pants in the bloody and ferocious claws
Of the infuriate tigress. See, already
She tears him piecemeal. Tremulous he falls,
He dies; and was—Ah! who forbears from weeping?
Oh, flash of lightning! What eternal ray
Bursts on my dazzled sight? Mortal I am!
The dense and fearful clouds, that, in their tomb
Of pitchy blackness, hold the future buried,
Behold, in volumes of sulphureous smoke
They roll away, and rapidly they vanish.
What do I see? I see, ah, yes, that traitor
Reeking with blood-drops yet. Perfidious traitor!
Reeking with sacred and tremendous blood,

Thou liest in the widowed bed yet warm!
Ah, impious lady! canst thou suffer this?

Mary—What voice is that? What accents do I hear?
Oh, heaven! what saidst thou? Presages of terror!
He hears me not; an unaccustomed flame
Burns in his rolling eye-balls.

Murray—Even now,
Thou second Ahab's daughter, do I hear
The horrid howlings; I already see
The bloody jaws of the infuriate dogs,
By whom thy impure entrails shall be torn.
But thou, who sit'st upon the usurped throne,
Son of iniquity! liv'st thou and reignest?

Mary—His bosom labors with a threatening God!
Oh, heaven! ah! hear me—

Murray—No, thou livest not:
Behold the scythe appointed to mow down
The impious harvest. Death, I hear thy shriek,
And thy invisible approach I feel.
Oh, vengeance of my God! of every crime
How dost thou take account! Heaven triumphs: see,
See the perfidious Jezebel is torn
E'en from the arms of her adulterous husband!
Behold the traitors are betrayed. Oh, joy!
They are dissevered—lacerated—slain!

Mary—Thou mak'st me tremble. Ah, of whom speak-
est thou?
I faint!

Murray—But what new sight? Oh, gloomy scene!
Around a dismal scaffold I behold
Sable and sanguinary ornaments!
And who is this preparing to ascend it?
Oh! art thou she? Dost thou, so proud and dainty,
Bend to the cleaving ax thy lofty neck?
Another sceptered dame inflicts on thee
The mighty blow. The faithless blood spouts forth;

And lo, a thirsty specter drinks it all
To the last drop! Ah! would the angry heavens
Be satisfied with this? But, comet-like,
Thou drawest after thee a fatal track;
A race of wretched, proud, and abject kings
Spring from the womb of the expiring lady.
The just and horribly avenging ire
Of heaven's Almighty Monarch runs transfused
E'en with their life-blood.

Mary—Wretched that I am!
What light, O minister of heaven, inspires thee?
Ah, cease! ah, cease! I die!

Murray—Who calls me now?
In vain from my affrighted eyes wouldst thou
Chase this tremendous sight. I see already
In the thick gloom the sceptered specters throng.
Oh! who art thou, that almost mak'st me shed
Tears of compassion? Ah! above thy head
The ax is lifted: now, alas! it falls.
I see thy severed and thy once-crowned head
Rolled in the dust! And art thou unavenged?
Alas! thou art: For thy distinguished head
Had long been due to a more ancient vengeance.
How many lesser royal shades I see
Fight, fear, retreat, discomfited in turns!
O lineage, fatal as thou art to others,
Destructive to thyself! For thee the streams
Are dyed in blood. And dost thou merit it?
Ah, fly thou, to contaminate no more
This region with thy footsteps: go, and seek
E'en in the breast of ignominy seek,
Connatural refuge: with idolaters,
Thy fit companions, herd: there drag along,
The throne's disgrace, the laughing-stock of men,
Scorned e'en in wretchedness, opprobrious days,
Mary—What do I hear? Alas! what unknown power

Have thy prophetic accents o'er my heart!

Murray—Oh, lofty transports of my troubled mind,
Of rapt imagination, of my full,
My laboring, yet illuminated spirit,
Whither have ye impelled me? What inspired?
Where have ye led me? What have I beheld?
To whom have spoken? Am I in the palace?
The palace! Oh, abode of grief and death,
I fly from thee forever.

Mary—Stop!

Murray—O lady,
Say, hast thou changed thy purpose?

Mary—Wretched me!
I scarcely seem to breathe! Must I then give
Means to my foes to injure me?

Murray—No, thou
Shouldst take the means of injuring from others;
But first discover who it is that injures.
For thy excuse I'm willing to believe
That Bothwell is not fully known to thee:
Such of that miscreant are the enormities,
That they were e'en sufficient to appall
The world's most hardened profligates.

Mary—Oh, heaven!
Should he betray me! Yet 'twere best to doubt—
Then go to Henry instantly thyself,
And, in my name, let Argyle be thy guide.
Provided that he promises on oath
Not to depart from Scotland till 'twixt us
Our mutual variances are cleared, I swear,
Ere morn, of all my troops to rid the plain.
Go, fly; obtain but this, and then return.

[Exit Murray.]

Scene Second

MARY.

Mary—What fear oppresses me! Alas, if ever—
But am I guilty? Thou, who knowest all things,
Knowest that I am not. Yet in my heart
I never had more horrible forebodings.
What can they mean? And from this Murray's lips
What fulminating imprecations rolled!
A night so pregnant with dismay as this
I never knew till now.

Scene Third

MARY, BOTHWELL.

Mary—What hast thou done?
Where hast thou dragged me? Say, is there yet time
For reparation? Bid thy men disperse.

Bothwell—What! hast thou once more changed thy
sentiments?

Mary—I never bade thee—thou first dared'st—

Bothwell—Yes,
I dared propose to thee a gentler means,
For the obtaining of thy end, than any
That thou contrived'st: and thou gav'st to me
The care of these, which I accepted. Now
Henry has seen my squadrons; he has heard
The name of Bothwell: to and fro he runs
Along the galleries, and for desperate fight
Prepares himself. Distinctly I beheld him,
By the glare of lurid torches, come and go,
Furiously chafe, and make parade of valor.
The thunder of his menaces descends
E'en to the plain. 'Twere easy to recall
The troops; but who could afterward appease
The rage of Henry? Of myself I speak not;

I were a trifling victim (if indeed
I could suffice) in such a cause as this.
But what would be thy fate? Henry incensed—

Mary—Ah, speak, did Murray not this instant go
From hence to Henry?

Bothwell—I beheld him not.
Say, has that lying demagogue again
Conferred with thee?

Mary—Ah, yes, too certainly!
Although the minister of a hostile sect,
What has he not revealed to me? Oh, heaven!
Fatal prognostics from his lips I heard.
Myself despatch'd him as a messenger
To my unyielding husband: may his words
Avail, as they have penetrated mine,
To penetrate his heart! Who knows? such means
Oft has the invisible heavenly Will elected:
Murray's perhaps His instrument. Go, run;
See that the King speaks with him.

Bothwell—Murray, foe
Of our religion, at his will aspires
To sway the feeble mind of Henry; hence
He feigns to be his friend. Arch-hypocrite!
His only passion is to head a party.
The most determined of the rebels stand
Already armed; they want a man to raise
The standard of revolt; and he will raise it.
What are their schemes, thou knowest; thou who, once
Fall'n in their hands, heard'st them dictate to thee
Their haughty and injurious laws; and I,
Who freed thee from them, too well recollect.
Now, while I breathe, I swear that thou shalt not
Stoop to these men: to disobey thee now
Is loyalty. All method of approach
To every man is absolutely closed;
And he who would attempt it, forfeits life.

In vain the most devoted of thy friends
Would there present himself; e'en in thy name
In vain would Murray go there.

Mary—What! hast thou
Ventured so far?

Bothwell—I dare, and I will save thee:
I'm perfectly aware of what I do.
If thou dost not now openly convict
Henry of guilt, since thou hast offered him
An open insult, thou thyself art ruined.

Mary—Let come what may come; I would rather die
Than bring a blot upon my fame. Obey!
Thy overweening zeal may injure me;
Then quickly go, and bid the bands disperse.
But what do I behold? What horrid blaze!
Ah! what a crash! Trembles the opening earth.

Bothwell—See! from the bursting clouds devouring
flames
Descend from heaven!

Mary—The opening doors fly back—

Bothwell—Hark! what a roaring in the smoky air!

Mary—Ah! whither shall I fly?

Scene Fourth

MURRAY, MARY, BOTHWELL.

Murray—Where canst thou fly?

Mary—Murray! what means it? Thou—return'st already?

Murray—And art thou here? Go, see thy murdered husband!

Mary—Alas! what do I hear?

Bothwell—Murdered! and how?

By whom?

Murray—Miscreant! by thee!

Bothwell—What dar'st thou say?

Mary—Oh, heaven! is Henry slain? But how? I heard
The terrible report!

Murray—But—thou art safe!
The house is blown up where thy husband sleeps,
Even from its foundation! He has found
A dreadful tomb amid its ghastly ruins!

Mary—What is it that I hear?

Bothwell—Assuredly,
Henry himself, to the collected powder
Stored mid-way up the hill, in desperate fit
Set fire.

Murray—Thee, Bothwell, every one proclaims
Thee, traitor.

Mary—Sacrilegious! hast thou dared—

Bothwell—Behold my head; 'tis forfeited at once
To him that proves me guilty of this deed.
I ask no favor at thy hand, O Queen;
But strict, entire, and expeditious justice.

Murray—Himself he slew not. Base malcontents
slew him.

Mary—Oh, horrible suspicion! Pang far worse
Than that of any death! Eternal blot!
Oh, cruel grief! Now quickly from my eyes
Let each withdraw. The truth shall be discovered;
And let him tremble, whosoe'er he be,
The atrocious author of a deed like this.
For vengeance now, and nothing else, I live.

Bothwell—O Queen, thy sorrow I indeed respect;
But for myself I tremble not.

Murray—Alas!

Hast thou a cause to tremble? On this spot
Till heaven's avenging thunderbolt is hurled,
The guiltless only have just cause of fear.

ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CREON, King of Thebes.

HÆMON, Son to Creon.

ANTIGONE, Daughter to Œdipus, former King of Thebes.

ARGIA, Widow of Polynices.

GUARDS.

SOLDIERS OF HÆMON.

Scene: The Palace in Thebes.

ACT I

Scene First

ARGIA.

Argia—Argia, thou art now at last in Thebes.
After the rapid journey I need rest.
Oh, how, as if by flight, I came from Argos!
Faithful Menætes, thou, infirm with age,
Couldst scarce keep pace with me. But yet I am
In Thebes. The shadow of night a friendly aid
Lent to my enterprise; unseen I entered.
This is the dreadful palace of my spouse,
Too well beloved, this is the tomb and cradle.
O Polynices! thy insidious brother
Here, in thy blood, his thirst for vengeance sated.
Thy squalid shade, all unavenged, still strays
Around these walls and spurns sepulchral rites
In impious Thebes, so near thy cruel brother.
It seems thou beckonest me to Argos still.
To thee a sure asylum Argos was;
Ah, hadst thou never moved thy feet from thence!
I come, I come, for thy most sacred dust.
Antigone alone, that faithful sister,
By thee so justly and so much beloved,
With pious hands can aid me to regain it.
Oh, how I love her! oh, what soothing thoughts
Will give a transient softness to my grief,
In seeing, knowing, and embracing her!
Yes, here, with her, upon that gelid urn,
Which should belong to me, I come to weep—
And shall belong; a sister to a wife

Cannot refuse it. Ah! our only child,
Behold the gift I bring thee back to Argos—
Thy sole inheritance—thy father's urn!
But where does my incautious sorrow lead me?
Shall I, an Argive, be in Thebes, and not
Remember where I am? I wait the hour
In which Antigone may venture forth.
How shall I know her? And should I be seen?
Oh, heavens! 'tis now that I begin to tremble;
Alone in Thebes—oh!—heard I not a step?
Alas! what can I say?—By what contrivance?—
I will conceal myself.

[Exit

Scene Second

ANTIGONE.

Antigone—This is the palace.
The night is dark; quick! let me hence depart.
What? do I hesitate? and do my feet
Stagger beneath my weight? Why tremble thus?
Whence all this apprehension? Do I plan
Aught that is criminal? Do I fear death?
I fear alone not to achieve my task.
O Polynices! O beloved brother!
Oh, wept till now in vain! The time is past
For tears alone—this is the time for action.
I feel myself superior to my sex:
Yes, on this day, in spite of cruel Creon,
Thou shalt from me receive funereal honors:
Yes, thou shalt now receive a sister's life,
Or from her hands the last sad obsequies.
O Night, who on this spot, of light unworthy,
Shouldst reign eternally, oh, pall thyself
In thy most dense, impenetrable glooms,
To second thus my lofty purposes.
Conceal me from the vigilant espial

Of royal satellites; I hope in thee.
Ye gods, if ye have not expressly sworn
That in this Thebes no pious ceremony
Shall e'er be consummated, I but ask
So much of life as may ensure performance
To this one act of sisterly affection.
Let me press forward; holy is the office;
A holy impulse urges me to action,
A lofty impulse of fraternal love.
But who pursues me? Ah! I am betrayed!
A woman comes to me? Who art thou? speak!

[Exit.

Scene Third

ARGIA, ANTIGONE.

Argia—I am a child of woe.

Antigone—What seekest thou
Within these thresholds at so late an hour?

Argia—I—seek—Antigone.

Antigone—But who art thou?
Know'st thou Antigone? To her art known?
What wantest thou with her? 'Twixt her and thee
What common interest?

Argia—That of grief and pity.

Antigone—Pity? Dar'st thou pronounce that word in
Thebes?

Know'st not that Creon reigns in Thebes? Perchance
To thee he is a stranger?

Argia—A few hours
I've been in Thebes.

Antigone—And dar'est thou, in this palace,
By stealth, a stranger, introduce thyself?

Argia—If in this palace I a stranger am,
It is the fault of Thebes: here I should not
Hear myself so accosted.

Antigone—What say'st thou?

Where wert thou born?

Argia—In Argos.

Antigone—Fatal name!

With horror it inspires me! Had it been
Always unknown to me, I had not lived
In everlasting tears.

Argia—If such distress
Argos in thee excites, Thebes causes me
Perpetual regret.

Antigone—There is a tone
That moves me in thy accents. I would soothe
Thy griefs by sympathy, if any griefs
Except my own could move me. I should be
As much disposed to listen to thy tale,
As thou couldst be to tell it; but, alas!
Time now to me is wanting, who lament
A much-loved brother.

Argia—Ah! it must be she!
Antigone thou art.

Antigone—But—thou—

Argia—'Tis she.

I am Argia; the unhappy widow
Of thy loved brother.

Antigone—What is it I hear?

Argia—My only hope, my only consolation,
Beloved sister, I at last embrace thee.
Scarce hadst thou spoken, ere thy tones recalled
The voice of Polynices: 'twas a sound
Inspiring boldness in my trembling heart,
And drew me from my hiding-place to meet thee.
How blest am I!—I find thee—Suffer me,
Ah, do thou grant that, 'mid embraces kind,
To my long-pent-up tears, upon thy bosom
I may at last give unrestrained indulgence.

Antigone—Ah, how I tremble! Daughter of Adrastes,
Art thou in Thebes? within these guilty thresholds?

In Creon's power! Ah, unexpected sight!
Sight not less dear than painful!

Argia—In this palace,
In which thou hopedst to enjoy my presence,
And where I hoped for thine, is this thy welcome?

Antigone—Dear art thou to me, more than sister dear.
Ah! Polynices knew how much I loved thee;
To me, thy countenance alone was strange;
Thy heart, thy manners, and thy disposition,
Thy mighty love for him, I knew it all.
E'en as he loved I loved thee: but I wished not,
Nor wish I now, to see thee in this palace.
A thousand fatal perils here surround thee.

Argia—Canst thou suppose me capable of fear,
Now my loved Polynices is no more?
What is there left to lose, what to desire?
Let me once fold thee to my breast and die.

Antigone—Here thou mayst have a death unworthy of
thee.

Argia—Die howsoe'er I may, if that I die
Upon the tomb of my beloved husband,
That death will be most worthy, and most welcome.

Antigone—What is it that thou say'st?—alas! his
tomb!

To him, who is thy husband and my brother,
A little dust to cover his dead body,
In Thebes, within his very palace gates,
Is interdicted.

Argia—But the unburied corse?

Antigone—Lies on the plain, exposed to beasts of prey.

Argia—To the plain I fly.

Antigone—Ah, check thy eagerness!
Creon, the barbarous Creon, swoln with pride,
From the possession of a throne usurped,
Braves fearlessly the laws, the ties of nature,
And more than these, the gods; not satisfied

With interdicting from the sons of Argos
All sepulture, a barbarous death awaits
Those who in secret give to them a tomb.

Argia—My spouse a prey to wild beasts on the plain!
And through that very plain e'en now I passed.
And did I leave thee there? Now the sixth day
Dawns since he fell transfixed by his fierce brother;
And uninterred, naked there he lies!
His bones there welter to the parching winds,
From his paternal palace thus by force
Excluded? and a mother suffers it?

Antigone—Beloved Argia, thou dost not yet know
The extent of our unparalleled misfortunes.
For when Jocasta had beheld accomplished
The horrid fratricide (ah, wretched queen!)
She shed no tears, nor made the air resound
With loud laments; unutterable grief
All speech, all natural emotion, palsied;
Her stony eyeballs, motionless and dry,
Upon the ground she fixed; from Erebus,
The shades of murdered Laius, of her sons,
Stabbed interchangeably each by the other,
With a tremendous vehemence she summoned.
They rose before her eyes; for a long time,
Upon the spectral visions it had raised,
Her maddened phantasy did strangely feed
With passionate eagerness. She struggled long,
And, mid reiterated throes of anguish
At last regained her reason. By her side
She saw her matrons and her desolate daughter.
She was resolved to die, but spake it not:
And thus she feigned, the better to delude us.
Incautious as I was, I was deluded.
I ought not to have left her. She made show
Of wishing to give nature the repose
It so much wanted. I indulged her wish,

ANTIGONE AND ŒDIPUS

From a Painting by H. Knœchel



And from her side departed. She had snatched
The sword, from his yet palpitating side,
Of Polynices; with more promptitude,
Than I can tell it thee, in her own breast
Plunged it, and fell, and breathed her latest sigh.
And I, why do I live? The impure remnant
Of such an impure race, I also ought
To plunge the same sword in my lonely heart;
But pity seized me for my sightless father,
My wretched father, neither dead nor living.
For him have I endured the abhorred light;
And for his tremulous age preserve myself.

Argia—For Œdipus? On him should rather fall,
On him alone, the horror of his crimes.
Does he then live, and Polynices die?

Antigone—Ah, wretched Œdipus! Hadst thou but
seen him?

He of our Polynices is the sire,
And pangs e'en greater than his fault endures.
Laden with sorrow, indigent, and blind,
A banished man, a wanderer, he goes
From Thebes. The tyrant dared to drive him thence.
Ah, wretched Œdipus! to tell his name
He will not venture. On our hated heads—
On Creon, Thebes, and even on the gods—
Blasphemous imprecations he will heap.
I had decreed myself to be the prop
Of his blind, vacillating feebleness;
But I was torn from him by force, and here
Constrained to tarry. Thus the gods might will;
For scarcely had my father left the city,
Ere Creon the unheard-of prohibition
Touching the sepulture of Argives slain
Promulgated; and who, except myself,
In Thebes, had ventured to defy its power?

Argia—Who, if not I, should share with thee the toil?

Here Heaven impelled me wisely. To obtain
Of thee the honored relics I came hither.
Beyond my hope, I here arrive in time
To see again, and to my bosom clasp,
That form adored; to wash with my warm tears
That execrable wound; to pacify,
With rites funereal, the unquiet shade.
Why do we longer tarry? Sister, come.

Antigone—Yes, to this holy office let us go;
But go, like victims, to appointed death.
I ought to do it, and I wish to die.
I've nothing in the world except my father,
And he is torn from me; death I expect,
And death I wish for. Leave me to construct it—
Thou, who shouldst life still prize—that funeral pile,
Which will unite me with my much-loved brother.
E'en while he lived his soul and mine were one.
Ah, may one flame consume our forms, and leave
One indistinguishable heap of dust.

Argia—And ought not I to die? What dost thou say?
Dost thou thus wish to conquer me in grief?
Equals we were in love; do I say equals?
No, mine was most profound. Ah, deeper far
Is a wife's love than sisters can conceive!

Antigone—Argia, I will not dispute with thee
About our love; thy death I will oppose.
Thou art a widow; what a husband thou
Hast lost I know. But thou art not the fruit,
Like me, of incest, and thou hast a mother.
Thy father is not blind like mine, nor outcast;
Nor—worse than all of these—a father guilty.
The more propitious gods to thee have given
No brothers that have emulously bathed
Each in the other's blood their murderous swords.
Think it not hard, then, if I, so far severed
From thee by woes unparalleled in life,

As one that's incommunicably stricken,
Covet self-sacrifice unshared by any.
Ere I was born my life was forfeited.
Return to Argos. Hast thou not forgotten?
Thou still hast there a living pledge of love;
There, in thy child, thou hast the very image
Of Polynices. Ah! return to Argos;
Rejoice the heart of thy despairing father,
Who knows not where thou art; go, I conjure thee:
No eye hath seen thee on these thresholds yet;
Yet thou hast time. Leave me alone to brave
The fatal prohibition.

Argia—Ah, my son?
I love him; yes, I love thee: but wouldst thou
That I should fly, if death is here decreed
For Polynices? Thou misjudgest me.
Adrastes will protect my little one,
To him will be a father. I, alas!
Should bring him up in tears; while he should be
To courage and to vengeance disciplined.
There is no threat, no terror, that can scare me
From the beholding his beloved corse.
My Polynices, shall another yield thee
The last commemorative obsequies?

Antigone—Wilt yield thy neck to the Theban battle-
ax?

Argia—It is the penalty that's infamous,
And not the punishment. The infamy
Will fall on Creon should we be condemned.
All will feel horror when they hear his name;
Pity when they hear ours.

Antigone—And wilt thou take
From me such glory?

Argia—I will see my husband,
And die upon his bosom. Tell me, sister,
What right hast thou my right to controvert?

Thou who didst see him die, and livest yet.

Antigone—Now I believe thee equal to myself.

At first, I felt myself, against my will,

Constrained to ascertain what wifely fears

Might in thy bosom lurk; I doubted not

The depth of thy affection, but thy courage.

Argia—Who is not made courageous by despair?

But, if I merited thy brother's love,

Could I in thought or action be ignoble?

Antigone—Pardon me, sister! truly do I love thee;

I tremble; and thy destiny alarms me.

But thou'rt determined? Let us then depart.

With the devoted race of *Œdipus*,

May heaven confound thee not! The night appears

More black than usual; certainly the gods

For us have darkened it. Take special care,

Sister, to check thy tears; more than aught else

They would betray us. The fierce satellites

Of *Creon* rigorously guard the plain;

To them may nought betray us, till the flames,

Consuming the inanimate body, blaze.

Argia—I will not weep; but thou, wilt thou not weep?

Antigone—We will weep silently.

Argia—Art thou informed

On what part of the plain his body lies?

Antigone—Let us depart. I know where it was thrown

By *Creon's* impious mercenaries. Come.

Lugubrious torches I will take with me;

Some sparks with which to light them, we will there

From flint elicit. Hence, without delay!

Silently bold accompany my steps.

ACT II

Scene First

CREON, HÆMON.

Creon—But what? Thou only in my joy, O son,
Takest no part? Thy father thou beholdest
Upon the throne of Thebes; he has secured
The scepter as thy firm inheritance.
Whence then these lamentations? Dost thou grieve
For Œdipus, or his devoted race?

Hæmon—Does my compassion, then, for Œdipus,
And his descendants, seem to thee a crime?
O father, from the throne there issued not,
On the dire day on which thou didst ascend it,
Such an auspicious and absorbing radiance,
At least to my dimmed eyes, as to dispel
The boding images that flitted round it.
Thou, perhaps, one day may'st bitterly repent
The acquisition of the Theban scepter.

Creon—I rather should repent, if need there were
Of penitence, that, for so long a time,
I had submissive been to guilty nephews,
Flagitious children of incestuous parents.
But if they have, for their atrocious birth,
By a still more atrocious death atoned,
Let everlasting silence be their doom.
Scarce is their destiny fulfilled, when, lo!
O'er Thebes the day-star more benignly rises,
The air is more serene, the gods themselves
Regard us more propitiously. Ah, yes,
I feel exulting hope of better days.

Hæmon—All expectation, but of wretchedness,
Is baffled by the event, amid the ruin
And death of those, to whom, by ties of blood,
We are most closely joined. A king of Thebes

(For King of Thebes he still must be accounted),
Œdipus, exiled, blind, and fugitive,
To universal and astonished Greece,
Presents a spectacle ne'er seen before :
Two brothers, murderers of each other ; brothers
Of their own sire ; sons of incestuous mother,
Sister to thee, and by her own hands slain.
Thou seest a horrid mixture of all names—
A horrid chaos of distress and slaughter.
Behold the auspices, behold the track
By which thou hast ascended to the throne.
Ah, father ! canst thou possibly be joyful ?

Creon—Œdipus, only with his longer tarriance
On this contaminated spot, had given
A signal to the vengeance of the gods ;
It was our duty to get rid of him.
But thou hast not without omission stated
All our afflictions. Impious Œdipus !
What hast thou not cost me ? I also shed
Tears for a son beloved ; thy elder brother,
Menæceus he, in whom the foolish frauds,
The lying and pernicious prophecies,
Of a Tiresias credence did obtain :
Menæceus, to self-sacrifice devoted,
To save his country ; by self-murder slain ;
While Œdipus still lives ? Perpetual exile
Is a light vengeance for his many crimes.
But let him bear with him to other shores,
That which will follow him where'er he goes,
The malediction of the angry gods.
Our tears will not undo what has been done ;
'Tis now our duty to forget the past,
And to grasp fortune, while we may, by force.

Hæmon—Unstable goddess, to secure her smiles
I'll not compel my heart ! O father, fear,
For there is cause, the anger of the gods !

Thy cruel prohibition, that prevents
The haughty and unburied shades of Greece
From passing Acheron, will wake their vengeance.
What art thou doing? With prosperity,
And with a throne, elated, know'st thou not
That Polynices boasts a royal birth,
Sprung from a mother who to thee was sister?
And shall he lie dishonored on the plain?
At least permit that the unburied corpse
Of him who is thy nephew may be burned.
Ah, to the sad Antigone, who sees
Of all her family the timeless end,
The body yield of her beloved brother.

Creon—As were her impious brothers, is not she
Of Œdipus the offspring?

Hæmon—As 'twas theirs,
The throne of Thebes by inheritance is hers.
Thou surely wouldst not scruple for a kingdom
To barter a dead body?

Creon—She's my foe.

Hæmon—Believe it not.

Creon—Loves she not Polynices?
Her father too? Creon she then abhors.

Hæmon—Wouldst thou, oh, heavens! that she should
not feel,

Or for her father, or her brothers, pity?
Perhaps, were she inhuman, she might gain
A more distinguished place in thy esteem.

Creon—No, not esteem her more, but hate her less.
A monarch should forestall another's hate,
And deem each man a foe that he's offended.
I have from fierce Antigone removed
Every pretext, in banishing her father.
Had they together both in exile gone,
They might have found, as wanderers, a king
That, under the affected veil of pity,

Concealed a wish his empire to augment;
And who, in their defense, might come to Thebes
As did Adrastes, armed. I hear thee blame
My prohibition, son, to which by motives
Deep, yet unfit for thy partaking in them,
I was impelled. They will be known to thee;
And thou wilt see that, though it may appear
A cruel law, 'tis indispensable.

Hæmon—The cause unknown to me! dost thou say so?
I fear that thou art ignorant of the effects.
Yes, for her exiled father, for her throne
Usurped unjustly for th' unburied corse
Of Polynices, without seeking it,
Antigone in Thebes may find revenge.
The people, by thy prohibition stung,
Murmur, and rail at it without disguise;
They long for its evasion; and at length
Will openly infringe it.

Creon—Be it so.

It is my wish that I may have the life
Of him who first may venture to infringe it.

Hæmon—Ah! what fierce enemy can counsel thee
Thus to contribute to thy own destruction?

Creon—My love for thee is my sole counselor.
Of what thou blamest thou shalt reap the fruit.
Long have the citizens in Thebes been wont
To witness crimes of darker hue than these;
What can they now intend, but to submit
And to be silent?

Hæmon—Oft beneath such silence
Vengeance lies couched.

Creon—The silence of the few;
But in the silence of an entire people
Lie hidden fear and abject servitude.
Ah, cease, O son, to oppose thy father's views!
No object of solicitude have I

More dear or more important than thyself:
Thou only now remain'st to me; alone
Shalt reap the fruits of my anxieties.
Perhaps thou meanest, ere his days are spent,
To prove thyself ungrateful to thy father!
But whence this clank of fetters and of arms?

Hæmon—Ah, who advances? In hard fetters bound
Two ladies dragged along? Antigone!

Creon—Th' incautious virgin in my snares hath fallen;
And ill can she escape.

Scene Second

Guards, with Torches.

ANTIGONE, ARGIA, CREON, HÆMON.

Creon—What is the crime these virgins have committed?

Antigone—I will declare it.

Creon—Let them be conducted

A little farther.

Antigone—In thy sight behold me
Mine own accuser. I've defied thy laws:
On the funereal pyre I've burned my brother.

Creon—And thou shalt have the threatened recompense;

From me, without delay, thou shalt receive it.
But thou, whose face I do not recognize,
Thou, whose attire bespeaks thee here a stranger,
Who art thou? Speak!

Argia—The rival of her virtue.

Hæmon—Ah, father, calm thy anger! female boldness
Deserves not the resentment of a king.

Creon—Resentment? What sayst thou, misdeeming youth!

An unperturbèd judge I listen to them.

Death is already theirs. Let this strange lady
First tell her name, and then they both shall have
The challenged retribution.

Antigone—I alone
Will have that retribution. On the plain
I found this lady; it was I that showed
To her my brother's corse; by Heaven conducted,
Thy satellites' unwary vigilance
I baffled; and invited her to aid me
In such a holy office; she complied,
And with her hand gave me a little help.
I know not who she is—in Thebes ne'er saw her.
Perchance she is from Argos, and intended
T' embrace, but not to burn, some of her friends,
Who in the battle fell.

Argia—Now, now, indeed,
Should I be guilty, and should well deserve
The direst punishment, if, urged by fear,
I dared to disavow a deed so sacred.
Flagitious king! learn then my name; exult
And triumph, when thou hear'st it.

Antigone—Ah! be silent.

Argia—Adrastes' daughter; Polynices' spouse;
I am Argia.

Hæmon—What is it I hear?

Creon—O worthy pair! ye are by Heaven delivered
Into my hands; of its just punishment
The heavens have chosen me the minister.
But, gentle lady, hast thou not brought with thee
The tender pledge of thy too transient love?
For thou art mother of a little heir
Of Thebes; where is he? he can also boast
The blood of Œdipus: Thebes longs to see him.

Hæmon—Oh! I am horror-stricken—to hear thee,
shudder.

Thou who hast lost a son, dar'st thou with jeers

To exacerbate a wretched mother's woe?
One mourns a husband; one a brother mourns;
And thou canst mock them? 'Tis too horrible!

Antigone—O thou too worthy son for such a father!
Do not degrade us with thy intercession.
Where Creon reigns, to be adjudged to death
Is a sure proof of lofty innocence.

Creon—Pour out, pour out, thy impotent upbraidings;
For they offend not me. Thou art most welcome,
So as thou hast it, to make light of death.

Argia—On me turn all thy rage; on me alone!
Hither I came alone, unknown to all,
By stealth; an entrance in these thresholds gained
By night, on purpose to defy thy laws.
The bosom of Antigone, 'tis true,
Swelled with suppressed resentment; she revolved
A thousand schemes; but silently she bore
The horrid prohibition; and had never,
Had I not come, incurred its penalty.
He is the criminal that plans the crime;
On the contriver falls the consequence.

Antigone—Ah, trust her not; inopportune compassion,
Vain generosity, her words inspire.
That she, by stealth, these thresholds passed is true,
But then she knew not thy despotic law.
She sought me here, trembling and apprehensive,
And at my hand required the fatal urn
Of her beloved lord. Hence, 'tis apparent
The fame of thy inhuman prohibition
Had not reached Argos. I do not pretend
That she did hate thee not as well as I
(Who does not hate thee?), but she feared thee more;
She hoped to be invisible to thee
(Too credulous, alas!), and fly from hence
With the possession of the sacred ashes
To bear them back to Argos and enshrine them

There in a consecrated monument.
Not these my hopes, who, from the first conception
Of this design, aspired to be thy victim,
And to be summoned thus to brave thy presence.
To be there I exult; and to thee swear,
That much as she, nay more than she, I hate thee;
That I the inextinguishable flame
Of hatred and revenge, with which I burn,
Into her breast transfused. Mine is the pride,
Mine is the hardihood, and all the rage
With which she now invests herself, is mine.

Creon—Perfidious pair! in vain each strives to prove
Herself proficient most in infamy.

I shall soon show to you, betwixt you two,
Which is the viler. Death, most infamous,
Such as is fitting, waits you both; ah! then
Another rivalry of tears, and prayers,
Of groans, will ye exhibit.

Hæmon—O my father!

To death most infamous? That cannot be:
Thou wilt not do it, no; to mitigate
Thy bitter vengeance, if compassion may not,
Reflection may constrain thee. Of Adrastes,
A potent king, Argia is the daughter;
Thou hast had proof Adrastes knows the way
To Thebes, and he may visit us once more.

Creon—Then, ere Adrastes visit us once more,
Argia shall be immolated. What?
Dost think by fear to make me pity feel?

Argia—Adrastes cannot now return to Thebes;
The heavens, the time, to him are unpropitious;
His troops, his treasures, and his arms exhausted,
He cannot now avenge me. Fear not, Creon!
Slay me, ah, slay me, and it will not be
That now Adrastes can chastise thee for it.
Yes, be Argia slain; since to her murderer

No consequence of evil can ensue;
But spare, ah! spare Antigone; for her,
And in her cause, by thousands and by thousands,
Desperate avengers will arise in Thebes.

Antigone—Cease, cease, O sister! do not thus misjudge
The tyrant thou accostest; he is cruel,
But not by chance, or to no purpose, cruel.
I now have hopes for thee; I see already
That I suffice for him, and I exult.
He wills to have the throne, thou hast it not;
But, by a misadventurous right, that throne,
Which he desires, which he usurps, is mine.
Ambition points me out, and me alone,
To be his victim.

Creon—Thine, sayst thou, this throne?
Infamous progeny of incest, death,
And not a kingdom, is your heritage.
Did not thy impious brothers prove this truth,
The murderers of each other?

Antigone—Impious thou,
Impious and vile! who to the deed of death
Didst goad them on by fraudulent contrivance.
If 'twas our crime to be our brother's children,
It was our punishment to be thy nephews.
Thou wert the author of the guilty war,
Thou the fomenter of fraternal hate;
Thou artfully didst fan the angry flame;
One thou didst instigate, the other flatter,
And both thou didst betray. And by such arts
Thou clear'dst the way to infamy and the throne.

Hæmon—Art thou determined on thine own destruction?

Antigone—I am determined that, for once at least,
The tyrant shall hear truth. Do I see one
Around him that dare speak it to him? Oh!
If thou the agonies of thy remorse,

As thou the tongues of all mankind couldst silence,
How perfect then, O Creon, were thy joy!
But even more so than thou art to others,
To thyself hateful, in thy restless eye,
Thy restless and thy circumspective eye,
Both crime and punishment are legible.

Creon—There was no need of fraudulent contrivance
To goad to death the abominable brothers
Of their own father; all the angry gods
Were emulous t' accelerate that death.

Antigone—Why dost thou name the gods? What god
hast thou
Except the expedient for thyself alone?
To this omnivorous deity, thy friends,
Thy son, thy fame itself, if these thou hadst,
Thou holdst thyself in readiness to immolate.

Creon—Hast thou aught else to say to me? Thou
know'st
That different offspring different gods appease.
Thou art a victim to the infernal destined,
The last, and worthy of thy impious race,
Thou shalt be offered as a fierce atonement.

Hæmon—Father, suspend a little the fulfilment
Of the dread sentence. I first ask of thee
A transient audience, to communicate
To thee some matters of the last importance.

Creon—Some unmolested hours they yet may pass
Of the unfinished night. I have determined,
Within myself, the moment of her doom.
Soon as the sun arises I will hear thee.

Argia—Alas! thou speakest only of my sister?
Now, indeed, I do tremble. Wilt thou not
Condemn me with Antigone to death?

Creon—No more delay; let them be both confined
Within the horrors of the darkest dungeon.

Argia—Together we shall go.

Antigone—Ah, sister, yes.

Creon—They shall be separated. I myself
Will be the keeper of Antigone.
Let us depart. Guards, to another dungeon
Consign Argia.

Hæmon—'Tis too horrible!

Antigone—Ah, come!

Argia—Sister, farewell.

Hæmon—I will, at least,
Pursue their steps.

ACT III

Scene First

CREON, HÆMON.

Creon—I am prepared to give thee audience.
Thou saidst, O son, that I from thee should hear
Matters of import high: at the same time
Thou may'st, perchance, from my lips hear the same.

Hæmon—A suppliant I approach thee. To confront
The first and fierce emotions of thy rage
I deemed unwise; now that it somewhat yields
To reason's influence, I come, alone,
The organ of the Theban multitude,
Thee to conjure, O father, to use, pity.
Wilt thou refuse me this indulgence, father?
Two pious women have infringed thy law;
But who would not have broken such an edict?

Creon—Who but thyself would dare to intercede
For those that have defied it?

Hæmon—Nor dost thou
Deem in thy heart their sacred enterprise
Worthy of death. Ah no! I think thee not,

Nor art thou, so unnatural and unjust.

Creon—Thebes and my son may call me at their will
Cruel, I am contented to be just.

T' obey all laws, whate'er those laws may be,
All are alike required. To Heaven alone
Are kings accountable for what they do;
And there is neither age, nor rank, nor sex,
That palliates th' audacious turpitude
Of incomplete obedience. To permit
A few delinquents to remain unpunished
Gives license to the many.

Hæmon—Didst thou deem,
When thou didst frame thy law, that two such women
Should be the first its penace to defy?
A wife, a sister, emulously both
Rising above their sex?

Creon—Hear me, O son;
From thee I ought not anything to hide.
Or thou know'st not, or thou will'st not to know,
Or thou pretendest not to fathom them;
I therefore wish to explain my plans to thee.
I thought, I hoped—what do I say?—by force
I would constrain Antigone alone
To be the first in Thebes to break my law.
At last I have obtained my heart's desire;
Antigone has fallen in the snare;
The useless law may now be abrogated.

Hæmon—Oh, earth! oh, heavens! and do I call thee
father?

Creon—Ungrateful son, or dull of apprehension,
For such my love would fain account thee still,
I am thy father; if thou hold me guilty,
I am so for thy sake.

Hæmon—I clearly see
The execrable means by which thou hopest
My fortunes to advance. Disastrous throne!

Thou never shalt be mine, if by such means
Thou are to be obtained.

Creon—I fill that throne,
That throne is mine which thou rejectest thus.
If to a father, as becomes a son,
Thou canst not speak, speak to him as thy king.

Hæmon—Unhappy son!—my father—pardon, hear:
Thou wilt not reap the fruit of such a scheme,
And wilt degrade thy name. Absolute power,
E'en in the king most absolute, avails not
To drown the cry of universal nature.
All feel compassion for the pious virgin;
Thy scheme will be discovered by the Thebans;
Discovered and abhorred, perhaps not suffered.

Creon—And darest thou welcome first the impious
doubt,
The doubt by all men hitherto unspoken,
Whether or not my will should be obeyed?
Save from my will, my arbitrary power
Disdains to hear of limit or control.
Thou hast not taught me how to wield the scepter.
I soon shall make in every Theban heart
All passions dumb, except the one of fear.

Hæmon—My intercessions, then, are unavailing?—
My fond reliance that thou wouldst relent?

Creon—Utterly vain.

Hæmon—The progeny of kings;
Two women, then, to opprobrious death are doomed,
Since at their hands due rites of sepulture
A brother and a husband has received?

Creon—One is thus doomed. Little the other's fate
Imports; as yet I know it not.

Hæmon—Me then,
Me then with her shalt thou consign to death.
Hear, father, hear! I love Antigone;
Long have I loved her, loved her more than life;

And ere thou tear'st Antigone from me,
Thou wilt be forced to take away my life.

Creon—Ungrateful son! Thus dost thou love thy father?

Hæmon—I swear I love thee, e'en as I love her.

Creon—Vexatious hindrance! In thy father's heart
Thou hast infixed an unexpected wound,
A mortal wound. Fatal will be thy love
To my repose, to thine, and to the fame
And glory of us both! The world holds not
Aught precious in my sight compared with thee.
Too much I love thee, herein lies my crime.
Is this thy recompense for such affection?
Thou lovest her, entreatest for her safety,
Who mocks my power, who holds me in contempt,
And dares to tell me so; and in her breast
Conceals ambitious wishes for the throne?
This throne, the source of my solicitude,
Because thou may'st one day inherit it.

Hæmon—Thou art mistaken. In her pious breast,
I swear, there lives not one ambitious thought.
No other thoughts are rooted in thy nature.
Hence thou know'st not, nor canst thou ever know,
The mighty power of love, before whose throne
All projects of advancement prostrate fall.
Thou didst not always deem Antigone
Thy enemy, yet have I always loved her.
To change, with change of circumstance, my love,
Was more than human nature could perform.
I could be silent, and I held my peace.
Nor, hadst thou not constrained me, should I now,
Oh, father, have revealed my secret fondness.
Oh, heavens! must she her virgin neck lay down
To the impious ax?—and must I suffer it?
Must I behold it? Couldst thou contemplate
With a less haughty and less clouded eye,

Her noble heart, her elevated thoughts,
Her qualities, as rare as they are sublime,
Thou, even as thy son, yea, more than he,
At once wouldst reverence and admire her virtues.
Who dared, beneath the cruel government
Of firce Eteocles, appear the friend
Of Polynices? She alone dared do it.
In whom, except in her, did her blind father,
By all deserted, find a pitying friend?
Lastly, Jocasta, then held dear by thee,
By birth thy sister, to her grief immense,
Afflicted mother, say, what other source
Of comfort had she left? In all her tears
What solace, what companion, did she find?
What daughter had she but Antigone?
Thou say'st she is the child of *Ædipus*;
But for a crime in which she bore no part
Her virtues make a plenary atonement.
Again I say, the throne is not her object.
Never, oh, never hope to see me happy
At her expense. Gods, were she so at mine!
I would not only give the throne of Thebes,
But that of all the world to make her so.

Creon—Does she return thy love with equal love?

Hæmon—There is no love that can compare with mine.

She loves me not; nor can she ever love me.
If she detests me not, it is enough
To satisfy my heart; I hope no more.
T' expect more from her heart, who ought to hate me,
Would be unreasonable.

Creon—But tell me further,
Would she consent to give to thee her hand?

Hæmon—A royal virgin, from whom have been torn,
And torn by impious violence, her brothers,
Her mother, and her father, shall she give

Her hand in marriage?—give it, too, to me,
Sprung from a blood that's fatal to her race?
Could I be so presumptuous? Creon's son,
Could I dare offer her my hand?

Creon—Thou may'st,
That hand at once restores her life and throne.

Hæmon—Too well I know her, and too much I love
her;

Fostered in weeping, more than ever now
She spends her life in tears. Perhaps hereafter
She may see days less tragical than these,
And may be less averse to listen to me;
Thou mayest then—

Creon—Thou vainly dost expect
That I should put our destiny in wardship
To time and its precarious events.
Guards, quickly be Antigone brought forth
Into my presence. She deserves to die;
I may, with justice, sentence her to death;
And it might be in me a proof of wisdom,
With summary rigor to inflict that sentence.
But yet, my son, thou art so dear to me
That for thy sake alone I will consent
To grant her life, to accept her as my daughter,
If she consent to yield to thee her hand.
And can she hesitate to make a choice
Betwixt a scaffold and a monarch's son?

Hæmon—Hesitate? no! She will choose instant death.

Creon—She hates thee then.

Hæmon—She loves the dead too well.

Creon—I understand thee. Thou desirest, son,
That I should life preserve in her, who would,
If she had power, take life from me and mine.
Canst thou presume to expect, or ask, so much
Of a fond father who so much loves thee?

Scene Second

ANTIGONE, CREON, HÆMON, GUARDS.

Creon—Approach! Thou findest me, Antigone,
Much more disposed to indulgence than before.
Not that I deem thy enterprise less guilty,
Or the annexed infliction less thy due.
Paternal love, more than the love of justice,
Hath wrought this change, My son most fervently
Hath asked for thee my pardon, and obtained it,
Provided that thou pledge thyself—

Antigone—To what?

Creon—To give him, in my sight, without delay,
A recompense he well deserves—thy hand.

Hæmon—Pardon, Antigone, I never asked
So great a blessing. He would give thee to me;
I wish alone to rescue thee from death.

Creon—On this condition thou obtain'st my pardon.

Antigone—Does Creon offer kindness? Ah! to me
What kindness can he show so great as death?
Death can alone eternally remove me
From thy detested sight. Thou makest happy
Those whom thou thus dost banish from thy presence.
Hæmon, obtain my death; 'twill be a pledge,
The only one I can accept, of love.
And recollect, O Hæmon, that it is
The richest gift a tyrant can bestow;
Which often he denies to those whose hearts
Possess a real, ardent wish for it.

Creon—Wilt thou not alter thy deportment toward
me?
Thou'rt always proud, always implacable,
Whether thou art condemned, or art absolved.

Antigone—Change my deportment?—'twere more possible

For thee to change thy heart.

Hæmon—This is my father.

If thou, Antigone, wilt thus address him,
Thou piercest my sad heart.

Antigone—He is thy father;

Hence all the worth he has; nor do I find
Any defect, O Hæmon, in thy nature,
But that thou art his son.

Creon—Peace! Clemency

In me was transient as the lightning's flash;
Already thou'rt superfluously guilty;
Nor is it now or needful, or expedient,
The guilt of thy vituperative tongue.

Antigone—The throne, incontrovertibly my right,
Which thou usurpest, makes me too, too guilty.
That throne I do not ask of thee, nor life.
The day on which thou took'st my father from me
I should have asked of thee the gift of death,
Or with my own hands on myself bestowed it,
But there remained a duty to perform,
To give due sepulture to my dead brother.
Now that I have that holy task accomplished,
Nothing remains for me to do in Thebes.
If thou dost wish my life, restore my father.

Creon—I offer thee the throne; and, with that throne,
A spouse thou hatest not; who loves thee more,
Antigone, than thou abhorrest me;
Who loves thee more, far more, than his own father.

Antigone—Hæmon, and he alone, if not more dear,
Perchance might make my life more bearable.
But what a life 'twould be?—a life dragged on
Where thou wert present?—while I still must hear,
Hear from Avernus, th' unavenged shades
Of my dead brothers, whom thou didst betray
And goad to murder, cry to me for vengeance?
Could I, a wife, hear this, and tranquilly

Repose in the embraces of the son
Of the destroyer of my family?

Creon—I comprehend thy meaning. The alliance
Would doubtless be too chaste. If there had been
Another son of Œdipus, 'twere he
Thou wouldst deem worthy thy illustrious hand.

Antigone—Daughter of Œdipus, ah, horrid name!
Daughter of Creon only still more horrid!

Hæmon—My hope, I see, is too presumptuous!
Blood can alone appease your bitter hate.
Choose then my blood; spill mine. Antigone,
Thy stern refusal does become thee well:
Father, thy anger's just. I love you both—
Both equally I love. Myself I hate.
Wouldst thou, O Creon, sentence her to death,
Permit that she deserve it at thy hands
By murdering thy son. Antigone,
Thou wishest on my sire to wreak thy vengeance?
Strike! in this breast thou wilt obtain it fully.
In me his only, his beloved son,
Thou takest from him; childless thou wilt make him,
Than Œdipus more wretched. Why delay?
Strike! by insulting thus my father, thou
Dost much more wound than if thou stabbed my breast

Creon—Do not yet utterly despair; her words
Bespeak less grief than anger. Lady, yield
To reason. In thy hands alone is placed
Thy destiny; on thee alone depends
Argia, whom thou lov'st so much, for whom,
Far more than for thyself, thou art afflicted:
Of Hæmon, whom thou dost not hate, thou art
The arbitress; of me thou also art;
Whom, if thou dost abhor beyond all duty,
No less thou oughtest to confess that I,
Beyond all duty, am to thee indulgent.
This day, that now is ushering in its light,

I yield to thee for thy mature reflection:
At sunset, death or Hæmon thou must choose.

Scene Third

ANTIGONE, HÆMON, GUARDS.

Antigone—Ah! why wert thou the son of Creon born?
Or why, at least, didst not resemble him?

Hæmon—Ah, hear me. On this instant, which I feel
To be the last of real life to me,
I fain would speak to thee my inmost thoughts.
Erewhile this confidence was interdicted
By the importunate aspect of my father.
Then know, for my excuse, that I'm the first
To praise, and to appreciate, and admire,
Thy stern refusal and thy sterner anger.
Rather than dare to offer it to thee,
By a slow fire I would consume this hand—
This hand, which seems to me unworthy of thee,
More than it seems to thee. Thou knowest well
That I do love thee; and thou shalt know well
That I esteem thee. But meanwhile (ah, state
Of anguish inexpressible!) my life
Suffices not to place thy life in safety!
Oh, that at least an inopprobrious death
I could obtain for thee!

Antigone—A death in Thebes,
Far more opprobrious than mine can be,
Fell to my mother's and my brothers' lot.
The ax to me seems almost like a triumph.

Hæmon—What dost thou speak of?—Ah, atrocious
sight!

I will not see it—will not live to see it.
But hear me, O Antigone! Perhaps yet
The King might be deluded. I speak not,
Thou wouldst not suffer me, nor would I do it,

To recommend aught of thy fame unworthy.

Antigone—I brave, but I delude not, e'en a tyrant;
And this thou knowest, Hæmon. Piety,
Fraternal piety, to artifice
Alone could urge me. Shall I now deceive
To save my life? Rather would I deceive
To accelerate my death.

Hæmon—At least awhile,
Awhile suspend it, though it be so fixed,
Thy lofty and inexorable will.
I ask for nothing that's of thee unworthy;
But yet, if thou canst, only by delay
Give comfort to another; if thou canst
Live without infamy, why shouldst thou be
So cruel to thyself, to me so cruel?

Antigone—Hæmon, I cannot do it. To myself
I am not cruel. Of Œdipus I'm daughter.
I grieve for thee, but yet—

Hæmon—I know it well.
Motive to thee of life I ne'er can be,
Yet thy companion certainly in death.
And still beyond the dreary waves of Styx
All the dear objects of thy lofty heart
Are not translated yet, Antigone.
In a sad life, yet nevertheless in life,
Œdipus and Argia still remain,
And her poor little one, who now grows up
The living image of thy Polynices;
For whom, perchance, thou wouldst one day desire
The passage to this throne, useless to thee,
To be preserved. Ah! yield a little while.
Thou ought'st to feign thou listenest to my prayers,
And that thou wilt be mine, in case that Creon
Allow an interval for time to lay
On thy most reasonable and lingering grief,
His slowly-working, yet emollient hand.

I too will feign to be appeased with this;
And will, at all events, obtain consent
For some delay of Creon. We may hope,
Meanwhile, for much from the effects of time.
I never can believe the Argive monarch
Will, to the thrall of ignominious fetters,
Abandon his own daughter. Oftentimes,
Whence least he's looked for, the defender springs
Ah, live! once more I do asseverate
That for myself I ask it not. Ah, live!
I am resolved to follow thee; and yet
I feel no pity for my own allotment,
Nor shouldst thou feel it for me; for thy blind
And wandering father, for Argia, here
An exile, I bespeak, conjure, thy pity.
Thou may'st from chains release her, to behold
Once more her father and rejoice his heart.
Ah! be constrained, what for thyself thou feel'st not,
To feel for them, compassion! At thy feet
Prostrate, and overwhelmed with bitter tears,
Hæmon invokes thy pity—he conjures it!

Antigone—And I conjure thee, now that I have need,
More than I ever had, of constancy,
Do not, in soft tears of effeminate love,
Do not dissolve my heart. If potent thus
O'er my fond breast thou art (and that thou art,
These rending conflicts but too well convince me),
Help me to save my fame; help me to die;
If thou in verity dost love Antigone.

Hæmon—Alas!—yet I have not deluded thee.
'Tis possible—all that I've pictured to thee.

Antigone—I never can be thine; why should I live?
Oh, Heaven! that I at least had never known
The real cause of my despairing grief.
And if I should, as spouse, unite myself
To thee but in appearance, what would Greece,

In hearing of it, say? My wretched father,
He who alone for my protracted life
Would be a worthy cause, if ever he
Of such an union heard!—In case that grief,
Torment, and shame, have not destroyed him yet,
To his paternal heart the horrid news
Would be a mortal stab. Ah, wretched father!
I know too well I ne'er shall see thee more;
No, never more;—but lonely, and the last
Of all thy children, I will die unspotted.

Hæmon—My heart thou rendest; yet I feel constrained
Such a resolve to venerate; for I
E'en I, to virtue am not quite a stranger.
But shall I let thee perish? Deign to hear,
If thou detest me not, my latest prayer.
At thy side will I plant myself; the blow,
The mortal blow, my bosom shall transfix,
Before it reaches thine. On cruel Creon,
Thou thus, in part at least, may'st be avenged.

Antigone—Live, Hæmon, I command thee. Love in us
Is such a crime, that I, by death, atone for't;
Do thou by life.

Hæmon—One more, one last attempt.
Inhuman father! sanguinary king,
Thou of a frantic and despairing son
Shalt be constrained to hear the latest accents.

Antigone—Alas! what is it that thou now contrivest?
A rebel to thy father? Ah, avoid
So horrible a stain, or do not hope
That I can love thee.

Hæmon—From thy fierce resolve
Can nothing make thee swerve?

Antigone—Nothing, if thou
Canst not.

Hæmon—Thou, then, preparest thyself?

Antigone—Ah, never,

Never to see thee more.

Hæmon—In a short time
Thou shalt, I swear, again behold my face.

Antigone—Ah, stop. Alas! dost thou not hear me,
Hæmon?

What wouldst thou do?

Hæmon—Spite of thyself, preserve thee.

Antigone—Stop!

Scene Fourth

ANTIGONE, GUARDS.

Antigone—Heavens! he hears me not. Now quickly,
guards,
Again conduct me into Creon's presence.

ACT IV

Scene First

CREON, ANTIGONE, GUARDS.

Creon—Hast chosen?

Antigone—I have chosen.

Creon—Hæmon?

Antigone—Death.

Creon—Death thou shalt have. But take especial
heed,

That when the ax is lifted o'er thy head
Thou dost not flinch; the time for penitence
Will then be past. Ill, perhaps, thou wilt sustain
The aspect fierce of death when it approaches;
Ill, if thou love her, too, thou wilt sustain
Argia's tears; she, by thy side, is doomed
To breathe her last; and thou art cause alone

Of her untimely end. Ah! think of it;
Thou still hast time, and I exhort thee to it.
Now, what is thy reply? Thou speakest not?
Intrepidly and steadily thou lookest?
Yes, haughty virgin, thou shalt have from me
That which thy contumelious silence asks.
I now regret that I allowed thee choice
Betwixt my own dishonor and thy death.

Antigone—Why dost thou now delay? Act, and be silent.

Creon—Make a parade of courage at thy will.
We soon shall see how far that courage goes.
Although the appointed moment of thy death
Be not arrived, to gratify thy wish
It shall be hastened. Go, Eurymedon;
Quickly conduct her to the ready scaffold.

Scene Second

HÆMON ANTIGONE, CREON, GUARDS.

Hæmon—Stop! To the scaffold?

Antigone—Now, now, guards, make haste.

Oh, misadventurous sight! drag me to death.

Leave me, Oh Hæmon, leave me! Now, farewell.

Hæmon—Dare none of you to drag her one step farther!

Creon—Rash youth! Dost menace in thy father's presence?

Hæmon—Thus dost thou love me, father? Thus cut short

The day thou granted'st to her?

Creon—'Tis her will

Thus to precipitate her destiny;

Can I refuse compliance?

Hæmon—Hear, oh, hear.

Dost thou not know then? Thou art menaced now

With other and most unexpected troubles.
It is reported that the King of Athens,
Theseus, that valiant hero, comes to Thebes
With armed multitudes. O'erwhelmed in tears,
And claiming reparation at his hands,
To him the desolate Argive widows went.
The King attended to their just complaints,
And pledged himself to gain for them the urns
Of their dead husbands; and thou knowest well
That Theseus is no empty promiser.
Propitiate his retributory wrath,
And our disgrace prevent. I ask thee not
Basely to quail at contumelious menace,
But that thou shouldst feel pity for thy Thebes;
Scarce do the glad notes of returning peace
Freshen the morning gales; though, for thy sake,
In an unrighteous cause I took up arms;
What men of prowess now remain in Thebes?
There lie the valiant in the battailous field,
Valiant no more; there, on th' ensanguined bed,
Pale and exanimate.

Creon—To abject fear
Dost deem it possible for me to yield?
Say, to what purpose, then, dost thou thus dwell
Oh distant, dubious, perhaps fancied dangers?
Theseus, that valiant hero, at my hands
Has not demanded yet the Argive urns;
Nor have I yet refused them to his threats.
Perhaps ere he with me shall treat for Argos,
I may anticipate his mediation.
Art thou contented? Thebes is still secure;
I have no wish for war. At last permit
That to her destiny this virgin go.

Hæmon—Wilt thou then thus forever lose thy son?
In vain thou hopest that a single day
I should survive her. Perhaps to lose thy son

Is but a trifle; but by this one deed
Thou rushest on a thousand various perils.
Antigone is now absolved; thyself
Absolvedst her when thou didst abrogate
Thy unjust law. All now are well aware
That thou contrivedst for her sake alone
The abominable snare. Shall Thebes behold
The honored daughter of her kings expire
Upon an infamous and bloody scaffold?
Ah, flatter not thyself that thou dost reign
O'er subjects so degraded. Loud laments,
Desperate menaces, and clank of arms,
Are heard already; even now they doubt.

Creon—Enough! enough! Since thou dost will it not.
Thebes shall not see upon a bloody scaffold
The honored daughter of their kings expire.
Soldiers, soon as the shades of night descend
Ye shall conduct her to the plain, where lie
Th' unburied heroes. 'Tis no longer lawful
To refuse sepulture to anyone;
The heroic Theseus prohibits this.
Let her then have it on the field of battle;
The interment which on others she bestowed:
Yes, there alive be buried.

Hæmon—What do I hear?
Dost thou dare thus defy both gods and men?
Ere thou canst put thy threat in execution,
Thou from the veins of thy indignant son
Must drain each drop of blood. Buried alive?
Ah, impious! Sooner on this very spot
Shall I be slain, reduced to dust and ashes.

Antigone—Ah, Hæmon, wilt thou make thyself unworthy
Of my affection? Whatsoe'er he be
He is thy father. Even from my birth
My fate has doomed me to a violent death.

If it be so, what signifies the place,
The time, the manner of my death?

Creon—In vain

Thou wouldst oppose; thou canst not rescue her;
Nor benefit thyself. O wretched father
Thou wilt make me; nought else canst thou perform.

Hæmon—To make thee wretched gratifies my soul;
Thou dost deserve it; and thou wilt be so.
The impious throne allures thee to defy
All the most sacred duties of a king,
Of father, and of man: but the more firm
Thou deem'st that throne, the more it shakes beneath
Thy sacrilegious and usurping weight.
The Thebans 'twixt the father and the son
Clearly distinguish; and there lives, I warn thee,
Who, with a nod, could snatch from thee at once
Thy throne so fraudulently gotten. Reign:
I will not give the signal; but, if harm
Befall this virgin, tremble.

Antigone—I beseech thee,
Creon, ah, quickly execute thy sentence!
Oh, fatal power of adverse destiny!
To my so many unexampled woes,
And to my guilty birth, there wanted nought
But that I should be 'twixt a son and father
The instigator of atrocious rage.

Hæmon—Listen to me, to me alone, O Creon:
Since swords of Athens, and its valiant King,
The prayers of women, or the loud lament
Of frantic multitudes, appal thee not;
Now on thy hard heart may the cry descend,
The terrible cry, of a despairing son;
From whom thou hast by mad ambition torn
All power of self-control; to whom, alas!
It had been better hadst thou ne'er given life;
And who, on this tremendous day, may make thee

Repent of such a gift.

Creon—No human cry

Suffices to impose a law on Creon.

Hæmon—There is a human sword that may suffice
To snap those laws at once.

Creon—And 'tis?

Hæmon—My sword.

Creon—Perfidious traitor! Plot thy father's death?
Cut short my days at once? AH, dare to do it!
Seize on the kingdom; trouble its repose;
Thy father still I am, though thou forget,
And almost seem to scorn, to be my son.
I know not how, nor can I, punish thee.
I have no power, except to love thee still,
And thy degenerate spirit to lament.
Say what of difficult do I achieve
That is not for thy 'vantage? but, ingrate,
And deaf, alas! too much so, thou dost dare
Prefer a love both indiscreet and foolish,
A love not well received, to lofty thoughts
Of policy, to sacred rights of blood.

Hæmon—Say, of what rights of blood dar'st thou to
speak?

Thou art throughout a king; thou canst not love
Thy son; thou only seekest a support
To tyranny. Should I, who sprung from thee,
Feel reverentially for ties of blood?
Thou art my law, my sole preceptor thou,
In cruelty; I follow thee; the goal
That thou hast shown to me I first will reach;
I swear I will. What lofty policy,
I pray thee, prompts the open turpitude
Which thou designest? Take thou heed, lest I
Should in like manner as thou provest it,
Return thy love. That love engenders crimes;
From it a thousand trespasses result,

Augmenting gloriously; and this thou knowest.

Antigone—E'en now I hate thee, if thou dost proceed.
Thou wert the son of Creon long before
Thou wert my lover; strong, infrangible,
Of all ties holiest, is the tie of son.
Think, Hæmon, ah! I do conjure thee, think,
That to this very tie I fall a victim.
That I do love thee, Heaven itself bears witness;
Yet I refuse thy hand not to offend
The shades, yet unappeased, of the departed.
Death I prefer, a shameful death I choose,
That tidings insupportable to him,
Of me, my wretched father may not hear.
Then be not thou refractory; but live
The obsequious son of a flagitious father.

Creon—His fury irritates my bosom less
Than thy compassion. Take her from my sight.
Go! go! An, wert thou once but fairly gone!
Thy presence from the path of rectitude
Alone seduces Hæmon. At the hour,
Which I already have assigned to thee,
Eurymedon, conduct her to the plain;
And there, at once, give her both death and burial.

Scene Third

CREON, HÆMON, GUARDS.

Hæmon—Before the hour assigned, thou from the
camp
Tidings shalt hear of me.

Creon—Or ere that time
Hæmon will see his error, and repent it.
I might anticipate and thus defeat
Thy idle menaces; but I will give thee
A more convincing proof of my affection,
By trusting to thy elevated heart,

ANTIGONE IN PRISON

From an Original Drawing by R. E. Gould



Thy early virtues, which I fain would think
Are in thee but suspended, not destroyed.

Hæmon—Yes; I protest that what I shall perform
Shall not disgrace the virtues of my youth.

Scene Fourth

CREON, GUARDS.

Creon—I know his temper well; his sense of honor,
More than aught else, can curb its vehemence.
My seeming confidence will much enthrall
The workings of his rage. Yet perhaps to-day,
Intoxicated as he is with love,
He may resort to force? But 'twill be easy
For me to watch, deceive, defeat, his steps.
When once Antigone has fallen my victim,
All will be easy. Theseus to appease,
To impose obedience on the multitude,
Regain my son—all this will be as nothing.
But of Argia how shall I dispose?
Guards, bring Argia instantly before me.
Her death no longer can promote my schemes;
And 'tis my interest now to pacify,
While yet I may, the anger ofAdrastes.
I have too many enemies already.
I will restore her to her sire in Argos.
This restoration, as 'tis unexpected,
Will yield him more delight; and thus the stain
Of cruelty, imputed to my nature,
Will be not inconsiderably lessened.

Scene Fifth

CREON, ARGIA, GUARDS.

Creon—Argia, listen to me. Grief sincere,
Love of thy husband, and fond piety,
Conducted thee to Thebes, where thou alone

Hadst never dared to brave my prohibition.

Argia—Thou art mistaken; I alone—

Creon—Well—Well—

Thou hadst defied it, then, impelled by pity;

Not from contempt, and as in proud defiance

Of my authority; not to excite

Clamorous disturbances. I can discern

Pity and love from factious disobedience,

Cloaking its close designs with better motives.

I am not cruel as thou may'st account me;

And, as a proof of this, accept thy freedom.

The shades of night protected thy approach;

When the sun sets the shades of night once more

Shall reconduct thee to thy sire in Argos.

Argia—Eternal farewell I have bidden to Argos:

The last remains of murdered Polynices

Are laid in Thebes; in Thebes, or dead or living,

I therefore will remain.

Creon—Dost thou not wish

To see once more thy child, thy sire, thy country?

Argia—I never can desert the sacred ashes

Of my beloved spouse.

Creon—In this, thy wish

I likewise will indulge. Thou cam'st by stealth

His ashes to obtain; openly keep them,

And bear the precious burthen back to Argos.

Depart; and there erect, among thy kindred,

A tomb expressive of thy deep regret,

To thy beloved spouse.

Argia—And is it true?

Whence can such clemency arise? And how

Canst thou so differ from thy former self,

And be sincere?

Creon—Erewhile inflamed with rage

Thou sawest me; but rage in me is transient;

Reason and time abate it.

Argia—May kind Heaven
Grant thee a reign both long and prosperous!
Thou then art won to clemency? What joy
Thy people and thy son will thence derive!
Thou hast at last felt pity for our fate;
Thou also ceasest, with the name of guilt,
To stigmatize compassion in ourselves;
And the offense to which thou forcedst us
Thou pardonest in us.

Creon—I pardon thee.

Argia—Is not Antigone then safe?

Creon—I do not
Confound thy fault with hers.

Argia—What do I hear?
She groans in fetters still?

Creon—Question no farther—
Prepare for thy departure.

Argia—Shall I go,
And leave in peril my beloved sister?
Vainly thou hopest it. Thy pardon pleased me
Because I thought she bore in it a part,
But she is fettered still? Fierce punishments
Perhaps await her? I will then be fettered;
And I will suffer punishments more fierce.

Creon—In Thebes, I will; not others; to that will
Of mine all yield. Thou hast infringed my law;
And yet I pardon thee: thou wouldst construct
Thy husband's funeral pile; this thou hast done:
Bear back his ashes to thy native Argos;
I yield those ashes to thee. What more wouldst thou?
What more dar'st thou to ask? Dost thou expect
That I should be accountable to thee?

Argia—At least permit me to obtain the favor
Of seeing her once more.

Creon—Thou wouldst, perchance
Gain from her intercourse a hardihood

Which in thyself thou feel'st not? When light thickens
I shall expect thee to depart from Thebes:
If thou wilt not go of thine own accord,
By force thou goest hence.

Argia—Than any death
Thy pardon is more cruel. Death, which to all
Thou givest, why to me alone deny it?
'Tis not thou art withheld by any fear
Of spilling blood. I am less innocent
Than is Antigone, why should not I
Incur an equal portion of thy fury?

Creon—Deem it or clemency or punishment,
Thy going hence; it gives me little pain,
Provided that clear quittance is obtained.
Guards, to your keeping I entrust her person:
At nightfall to the Omolæan gate
Descend, and bear her to the Argive boundaries:
If she refuse to go, drag her by force.
In the mean time replace her in the prison.

Argia—Hear me!— have pity!—

Creon—Hence! depart!

Scene Sixth

CREON.

Creon—Must I
To my commands, whether they're kind or cruel,
Find all rebellious?—All at last shall yield.

ACT V

Scene First

ANTIGONE, among GUARDS.

Antigone—Let us make better speed; so slow a step
Ill becomes her who has at length just reached

The goal so long desired. Perhaps ye, guards,
May feel compassion for my fate? Proceed.
Oh, terrible death, I look thee in the face,
And yet I tremble not. Not for myself,
But for Argia, am I troubled thus.
Guards, is her fate to any of you known?
Speak, if ye aught can tell? Ye all are silent?
Argia, for thy sake alone I weep.

Scene Second

ANTIGONE, ARGIA, among GUARDS

Argia—I am then driven from Thebes? 'Tis true, I
bear,

Beginning and the end of all my hopes,
This urn with me; but not one last farewell
To my beloved companion!

Antigone—Ah! what voice,
What sobbing voice is that I hear?

Argia—Oh heavens!
Whom do I see?

Antigone—Argia?

Argia—Dearest sister,
How fortunate this meeting! But, alas!
Thy hands with chains are laden!

Antigone—Tell me quickly!
Where art thou thus by force compelled to go?

Argia—To Argos, to my sire.

Antigone—I breathe again!

Argia—Creon esteems me of so little worth,
That he repeals my sentence; but, alas!

Antigone—Guards, if ye ever knew a shade of pity,
To our last interview do not refuse
A few brief moments. Come to me, my sister;
Why cannot I to this sad bosom clasp thee?
But bound with impious and galling chains

I have no power, yet clasp me to thy bosom.
But what do I behold? What precious burthen
Dost thou, with such a fond anxiety,
Fold to thy breast? An urn? It is, oh, heaven!
The ashes of my brother, fatal pledge,
Fatal, and yet inestimably dear.
Ah, press this sacred relic to my lips.
And is it granted to me, ere I die,
With my warm tears to bathe thee? O my brother,
'Tis more than e'er I hoped. These tears, the last
That I shall ever shed, are well bestowed.
This, O Argia, is a precious gift.
Creon, in granting this, was most indulgent;
Thou should'st be satisfied. Return to Argos;
Quickly return; to thy despairing father
Carry this urn. Live, for thy son's sake, live;
And o'er this urn to weep; and—mid—thy—tears
Remember still Antigone.

Argia—My heart

Thou rendest; scarcely can I speak from weeping:
But shall I live while thou art doomed to death?

Antigone—Yes; to a death most horrible I go.
The plain on which we piously performed
Last night our sacred rites is destined now
To be my place of burial; Creon wills
That on that plain I shall be buried living.

Argia—Oh, impious!

Antigone—Because he fears the people,
He has deferred till night to execute
Th' atrocious sentence. Ah, restrain thy tears.
Leave me! depart! thus will at last in me
The race of CEdipus be quite extinguished.
This I regret not; may my lingering death
Suffice to expiate the dreadful crimes,
So oft repeated, of my family.

Argia—Ah! I will share with thee thy punishment;

Thy courage strengthens mine; thy pangs, in part,
May perhaps be thus diminished.

Antigone—What sayest thou?
Rather will they be thus a thousand times
More exquisite!

Argia—Together, if we die,
We may at least invoke the sacred name
Of Polynices; may exhort each other;
Lastly we may shed tears.

Antigone—Be silent thou.
Do not, I pray thee, make me weep again.
To the last test my constancy is brought.
My tears I cannot check unless thou'rt silent.

Argia—Alas! then cannot I, or rescue thee,
Or die with thee?

Antigone—Rather resolve to live.
Thou'rt not the child of Œdipus; thy heart
Is not like mine, with guilty love consumed;
Of the betrayer, and the murderer,
Of all thy race, thou lovest not the son.
Here is my crime; I ought alone t' atone for it.
Hæmon, ah! still my heart, in all its force,
The passion feels that thou hast planted there,
Feels all the grief to which I leave thee victim.
But let me to my doom. Sister, farewell!

Scene Third

CREON, ANTIGONE, ARGIA, GUARDS.

Creon—Why do ye thus delay? Has she not yet
Reached the appointed place of punishment?
What do I see? Argia? And with her?

Who could unite them? Which of you betrayed me?

Antigone—Thy satellites, less hardened than thyself,
To me have granted a few transient moments.
By chance we met each other; to my death

I go without delay; ah, be appeased!
Thou hast performed a just and pious deed
In granting thus Argia's safe return.

Argia—Creon, unite my destiny to hers.

Antigone—Ah, fly! ah, fly! lest he should cease to pity.

Creon—First to her destination drag Argia.

Argia—Ah cruel! will ye tear me thus by force?

Antigone—Give me the last embrace.

Creon—Tear them by force;

Tear them asunder; wrest them from each other:

Quickly obey, it is my will.

Argia—Oh heavens!

I ne'er shall see thee more!

Antigone—Farewell—forever!

Scene Fourth

CREON, ANTIGONE, GUARDS.

Creon—By the other gate conduct her to the plain.
But no. Again immure her in the place
From whence she came. [Whispers in his ear.] Ipseus,
listen to me.

Scene Fifth

CREON.

Creon—Thus from the malcontents I have removed
All cause of murmuring. I have well reflected;
Nor should have changed my purpose but for this.
By this means all will be conciliated.
The guilty factions of the people rise
From an innate impatience of restraint;
Yet oft they cloak themselves in feigned compassion,
And evermore with danger is it fraught,
The people's pity, whether true or feigned;
And now, so much the more, as now my son,

By heading them, adds to their hardihood.
'Tis too, too true, that he who fills the throne
Vainly believes, or rather feigns belief,
To cheat his natural imbecility,
That he can change, or modify at will,
Human propensities, or that a king
Gains with his crown a superhuman power.
That power resides but in the subjects' will;
He trembles at it who makes others tremble.
But still a hand expert, a subtle head,
Suffer not others to forestall their schemes.
One stroke lays low the idol of the people,
Lays low their hope, their courage, and their strength,
Not irresistible because unknown.
But, ah! what noise is this I hear around me?
What brandishing of swords do I behold?
What do I see? With armed confederates
Hæmon encircled? and toward me advancing?
Let him advance! The moment is well chosen.

Scene Sixth

CREON, HÆMON, the Followers of HÆMON.

Creon—Son, what is thy intent?

Hæmon—Call me not son!

I have no father. Of a tyrant king
I come to abrogate the impious laws.
But for thyself thou hast no cause for fear;
I do not come the avenger of thy crimes;
That to the gods belongs. To rescue Thebes
From the detested sight of further crimes
My right hand brandishes the naked sword.

Creon—Against thy father, and against thy king,
Thou, thou in arms? The people to seduce
To civil tumult and rebellious discord,
This surely is an unexampled means

Of sparing further crimes. Ungrateful son,
Blind and ungrateful son! Yet, in despite
Of thy transgressions, to thy father dear!
What dost thou seek?—a scepter premature?

Hæmon—Reign and prolong thy days; nothing of
thine

Do I desire; but I demand, and challenge—
And with these valiant followers, with this arm
I shall know how to gain by force—my own.
Argia and Antigone I seek
To rescue from thy hands.

Creon—What dost thou say?
Oh, foolish and presumptuous hardihood!
Dar'st thou to brandish thy perfidious sword,
Against thy father brandish it, to unloose
The chains of those whose chains are loosed already?
Argia, from imprisonment released,
Is, at this moment, journeying toward Argos;
I send her as a present to her father:
To this, thou seest, the terror of thy sword
Did not erewhile compel me.

Hæmon—But, ah, say,
What are the fortunes of Antigone?

Creon—She from the horrors of her squalid prison
Is also freed.

Hæmon—Where is she? I would see her.

Creon—Is this alone thy wish?

Hæmon—On me alone
That now depends. Why should I now indeed
Demand her at thy hands? I can, and will
(Although it is not mine), for a brief while,
Give in this palace law. Brave warriors,
Let us depart; from impious power set free
A royal virgin, to whom aught is due,
In this her Thebes, rather than punishment.

Creon—Thy warriors are useless; thou alone

May'st for this task suffice; and who will dare
Thy footsteps to oppose? Ah, enter there,
Take with thee whom thou wilt. I humbly here,
Among thy champions, thy despised father,
Remain, till thou, her valiant avenger,
Return and triumph.

Hæmon—Thou in jest, perchance,
Dost speak; I speak in earnest. Creon, see,
See, if my deeds do not make good my words.

[The scene opens, and discovers the dead body of Antigone.]

Creon—Go. Thou sufficest not to humble Creon.

Hæmon—What do I see? Oh, heavens! Antigone!
Infamous tyrant! dost thou smite me thus?

Creon—'Tis thus I humble pride; thus to my laws
Enforce obedience; thus reform my son.

Hæmon—Reform me? Ah, I am too much thy son!
Ah, were I not so! in thy bosom thus.—

[He springs toward his father with his drawn sword,
but on a sudden stops, and, turning it, plunges it into
his own bosom.]

I die—I die.

Creon—My son, what hast thou done?

Hæmon—Dost thou inopportunistly pity me?—
Carry elsewhere thy pity. Come not near me.
Do not exasperate my dying pangs.
Thus do I yield to thee the blood 'twere better
Thou ne'er hadst given to me.

Creon—Son, rash son!

I call the gods to witness, I ne'er thought
That an ungovernable passion thus
Would arm thee 'gainst thyself.

Hæmon—Fly!—quit my sight.
And force me not, with my last gasp, to curse thee
With horrid imprecations of despair.
I was—to thee a son—Thou never wert

Never—to me—a father.

Creon—Oh, my son!

Hæmon—I leave thee to remorse and bitter anguish.
My friends, my friends, as a last act of kindness,
Drag my expiring body to the spot
Where lies Antigone. It is my wish
That thence my struggling spirit take from earth
Its latest flight.

Creon—O son—too well beloved!
And must I yield thee thus? forever thus
Remain a childless wretch?

Hæmon—Creon, once more,
Or in my bosom plunge the fatal weapon—
Or let me to the side of her—I love—
Be dragged—and—there—expire.

[He is slowly supported by his friends toward the body
of Antigone.]

Creon—O son!—oh blow,
Fatal and unexpected!

[He covers his face, and remains immovable, until Hæ-
mon is almost out of the sight of the spectators.]

Scene Seventh

CREON.

Creon—Thus, thou first
Tremendous retribution of the skies,
For blood unjustly spilled, art thou accomplished!
I see thee armed with terrors, and I tremble.

